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WRITINGS

OF

REV. WILLIAM BRADFORD HOMER,

LATE PASTOR OF THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN SOUTH BERWICK, ME.

WITH A MEMOIR

BY

EDWARDS A. PARK,

BARTLET PROFESSOR IN ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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PREFACE.

Soon after the subject of the following Memoir had been called from life, his friends expressed a unanimous desire that some of the fruits of his scholarship should be given to the public. The parish over which he had been ordained, and the Association of ministers with which he had been connected, testified their regard to his memory by formally requesting his sermons for the press. Candidates for the sacred office and clergymen who had but recently commenced their labors were especially earnest for the publication of his essays and discourses. It was often said that the writings of a young man are peculiarly attractive to scholars of his own age, that his excellence, whatever it be, engages more of their sympathetic interest and is therefore more readily imitated, than the excellence of a writer who is further removed from them in age and cultivation. There is sometimes an approach to perfectness in a model which discourages all attempts to equal it, and men are often less benefited by such a copy than by one which is less highly finished. Man has a tendency to imitation which cannot be entirely repressed. Whenever he may properly indulge it, he should look not merely for standards which are free from fault, but also for such as are *imitable*, and such as afford incentives to original exertion. It is not claimed that the writings of Mr. Homer furnish a model for the imitation of all, but it is thought that they exhibit some good qualities which are seldom found in the pulpit, and that they may stimulate the

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youthful preacher to attain those varied excellences which are called for by the various wants of the community. They show that in the esteem of a christian scholar there is no human composition so important or so dignified as a sermon, if it be a true sermon and not in the words of Bishop Andrews "*called so* by a charitable construction;" that the pulpit is not only the "preacher's throne" but is raised far above any other station on earth, and that all attainments in ancient or modern literature may be properly subordinated to the work of "persuading men in Christ's stead to become reconciled to God." They show the influence of a minister's private character upon his public performances, that an orator must be a good man, and that virtue is profitable unto all things in this life.

It was with great reluctance that the editor of the present volume undertook to prepare it for the press. He well knew that Mr. Homer did not write for the public eye, that he dreaded the criticisms of the multitude and would have shrunk back from the remotest suggestion of printing his posthumous remains. "When I am gone," he once remarked, "I wish that nothing more than my name and my age may be told to those who survive me." Many of his compositions were written in haste, and but few of them had received the finish that he might have given. The editor was also aware that the volume ought to be issued sooner than he could hope for sufficient health even to commence the preparing of it, and he therefore endeavored to devolve the labor upon other hands, but in vain. Denied almost entirely the use of his eyes, he has been obliged to omit some correcting processes which he would gladly have performed; and fearing to mar the individuality of Mr. Homer's writings, he has left unmodified some of the statements that seem to him not entirely accurate. No alterations have been made but such as leave unimpaired the identity of Mr. Homer's character and style, and such as when once suggested to him would probably have received his sanction. In delineating the character of Mr. Homer the editor has been much assisted by several friends

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of the deceased, and is happy to express his gratitude for their valuable communications. He is also largely indebted to a few individuals who have revised much of the copy for the press, and have corrected all the proof sheets. That the volume is not free from imperfections the editor is fully aware. It does not contain several of Mr. Homer's discourses and critiques which his friends have desired to see in press, nor his highly commended oration on the Harmony of the Professions, which he delivered at Amherst College when he took his degree of Master of Arts. In preparing the Memoir, also, the editor has fallen below the standard which he had set up, and has failed in delineating the character which he understood for himself better than he could describe for others. He dismisses the work, not with the "frigid tranquillity" which Dr. Johnson speaks of, but with the reflection that under many disadvantages he has done what he could for the memory of one who deserves a better memorial.

Theol. Sem. Andover,
May 2, 1842.

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MEMOIR.

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MEMOIR.

THERE are two classes of youthful productions which will always attract greater interest than is authorized by their intrinsic value. One class comprise the effusions of children whose physical system becomes a prey to their mental precocity, and whose premature death imparts a pleasing sadness to their expressions "too old for childhood." The other class comprise the juvenile efforts of those whose matured life has been full of honors, and the excellence of whose manhood has lent a charm to the essays of their minority. When Benjamin Franklin was in his fourteenth year, he composed two ballads, printed them with his own hands, and went around the streets of Boston, selling them for his brother James to whom he had been apprenticed. One of them was in relation to a shipwreck, the other to a piracy; both of them were, in his own words, "wretched stuff, written in the common street-ballad style;" yet if some carrier of a penny newspaper in Boston, could now find those doggerel rhymes, he would make his fortune by hawking them around the same streets where their author sold them for a pittance, and even that for the benefit of his elder brother. We are interested in inverting the spy-glass, and making the objects appear small and remote, which we know to be large and near. As we love to imagine the future greatness of a mind that promises more, perhaps, than it will ever perform, so we love to examine the incipient efforts of a mind that has performed more than it originally promised. On the one hand, the writings of Mr. Homer will

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not attract the interest of such as love nothing but the marvelous, and are pleased only when they are amazed, for they exhibit no unhealthful precocity, and he lived too long to present the most striking and dazzling contrast between his years and his powers. On the other hand, his productions may receive but little regard from those who can discover no merit where the indications of youth have not been equaled by the attainments of manhood, and where the seal of a great name has not been stamped upon essays which betoken more of value than they contain. But although he did not live long enough to invest his early efforts with the interest which they might have borrowed from the high scholarship which he promised, he was not called away until he had exhibited some mental processes which may well receive the notice of meditative minds, nor until he had made himself immortal in the memory of some friends, who loved him because they knew him, and who will honor his name by the continued study of his character.

MR. HOMER'S CHILDHOOD.

William Bradford Homer was born in Boston, January 31, 1817. He was the second son of Mr. George J. and Mrs. Mary Homer. On the maternal side, he was a lineal descendant, of the eighth generation, from William Bradford, a passenger in the May-flower, and the second governor of Plymouth colony. From the age of five years until within six months of his death he was a pupil in the schools, and the whole course of his pupilage seems to have been one of success. "Behave as well as Bradford Homer," was a remark sometimes made by his teachers to his fellow pupils. The severest chastisement which he ever received from an instructer, was the following admonition, "Bradford, be careful to keep truth on your side." So deeply was his spirit wounded by this reprimand, that even in maturer life he

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never could meet the reprover without uneasiness. He was, from the first, a truth-loving boy, and the mere suspicion of unfaithfulness to his word, was one of the most mortifying punishments he could receive.

It was a principle with his parents, as with the mother of George Herbert, that "as our bodies take a nourishment suitable to the meat on which we feed, so our souls do as insensibly take in vice by the example or conversation with wicked company; that ignorance of vice is the best preservation of virtue, and that the very knowledge of wickedness is as tinder to inflame and kindle sin, and to keep it burning." In accordance with this principle, great care was taken to prevent Bradford from associating with improper companions. He was often sent, of a holiday, with a few select associates, to a quiet rural residence in the vicinity of Boston, and was furnished there with such amusements as nurtured a distaste for the dissipating scenes of a parade-ground. He was kept a stranger to the indecorous language and sports so frequent among the children in large cities. No improper word would pass his lips, because none would enter his ear. He was unacquainted with the vocabulary of vice, and when he afterwards read it in Shakspeare, he read it with the simple-hearted innocence of a child. He preserved, through life, the same unsophisticated spirit. His words, his manners, and his whole appearance proved him to be guileless and untainted, "the purity of his mind breaking out, and dilating itself, even to his body, clothes and habitation."

When about seven years of age, he went through a private course of exercises in elocution, under the care of Mr. William Russell of Boston, and early acquired that flexibility and distinctness of speech, which contributed to his subsequent success in the pulpit. In his eleventh year, he was sent to Amherst, Mass. where he spent three years as a member of Mt. Pleasant Classical Institution, and afterwards, with the exception of a single twelve-month, and of occasional

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brief vacations, he never resided under his father's roof. Whenever the boy left home, it was with suppressed tears, and for a day or two after his arrival at the institution, he was sorely and sadly homesick. For days before the close of his term, his heart would leap for joy at the thought of revisiting his friends; and when, with elastic step, he had alighted from the stage-coach at his parent's door, he entered the house with boundings of heart, and brought hilarity with him. In the words of his father, "to have seen his glad and happy countenance on meeting his friends, after a few month's separation from them, would have moved the heart of a stoic." That he retained his innocent dispositions during so long continued an exile from his kindred, is one sign of the excellence of his moral temperament. His early and protracted absence was, perhaps, more serviceable to him, than it would have been to ordinary children. Had his attachment to home, and his disposition to cling around a few intimate and choice friends been met with no opposing influences, his character might have been deficient in the masculine virtues. But his residence among strangers obliged him to plan for himself, and counteracted those effeminate tendencies which are often encouraged in sensitive and confiding children. To the stranger who noticed his pliant manners and conciliating temper, he might have appeared to fail in manliness and independence; but his intimate friends always recognized in him "a mind of his own."

It was in August, 1827, that he become a pupil at Mt. Pleasant, and his tastes were never more gratified than with the beauties of this enchanting spot. Here he devoted much attention to the cultivation of his manners, and became a gentleman before he was a man. He acquired that ease of address and gracefulness of action, which, if attained at all, must generally be attained in early life, and which afterwards secured his admission to circles of society inaccessible to some clergymen. Those minor accomplishments which were

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not beneath the notice of a boy at eleven years of age, gave him an influence at twenty-four, which others, equal to him in unpolished worth, could not exert. Men who disliked his doctrines were pleased with the blandness and urbanity of him who enforced them, and his delicacy of form and attitude would recommend the severity of his reproof. "I like him," said one of his hearers, "because he moves on springs."

He was particularly studious in the Latin, ancient and modern Greek, and French languages. Several of his essays in the ancient Greek were published in successive numbers of a Juvenile Monthly, printed for the pupils of the institution. His progress in the modern Greek was still more flattering. He wrote many compositions in this language, and delivered one of them at a public exhibition, when about twelve years of age. He also conversed in it with considerable fluency. His teacher, Mr. Gregory Perdicari, a native of Greece, and now United States' consul at Athens, was in the habit of taking him to various families in the town, and conversing with him in modern Greek, thus exhibiting him as a kind of literary show. Mr. Homer often alluded to this parade as more conducive to his progress in the native language of Mr. Perdicari, than in humility. His vocal organs being remarkably ductile, and his discipline in the Greek and French pronunciation having been thus early and exact, he afterwards found but little difficulty in catching the sounds of the German and other languages. The recommendations which were written of him by his teachers at Mt. Pleasant, are such, that if he ever saw them, he must have been mature beyond his years, to have borne his faculties meekly. "I have no recollection," says one of them,[1] "that during the three years of his pupilage at Amherst, I ever had occasion to speak to him in the way of censure. It would be extraordinary indeed, if he were not sometimes found in fault, subjected, as all the students were, to a discipline of some severity; but if

[1] Francis Fellowes, Esq.

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such were the case, the general correctness of his deportment and amiability of his manners, have, in my mind, suffered no shade of it to rest upon his memory."

It was at Mt. Pleasant, in May, 1828, that the great and radical change occurred in Mr. Homer's moral feelings. There was, at this time, a general religious excitement among the pupils of the institution. The spacious mansion became a temple of worshippers, and the contiguous grove resounded with the voice of prayer. Perhaps at no place is there more of sympathy and contagion, than at a large boarding-school of children, and hence the religious agitations at such a school need to be carefully scrutinized and wisely regulated, or they will be of no permanent benefit. Of the forty boys who manifested symtoms of spiritual life during this revival, not one fifth of the number retained their religious promise. It is to be regretted, that Mr. Homer has left no very specific account of his feelings at this critical period of his life. His letter announcing his conversion is a very simple one, and he seems to rejoice in his change, not so much because it will save his soul, as because it will please his father and his mother; and to be anxious, not so much to persevere in the christian life, as to see his brothers and play-mates turn to God as he has done. Four years after his supposed conversion, when he was about to profess his religious faith, he made the following statement to the committee who examined him for admission to the church.[1] "I was much distressed, while at Mt. Pleasant, in view of my sinfulness, but after two or three days, I indulged a hope of pardon. I had, at that time, different views of myself, of God and of Christ, from those which I had previously entertained. I felt a love for my Maker, and wished to devote myself to his service. I began to delight in prayer, and in the bible, which seemed to me a new book. I felt anxiety for the salvation of others, and was induced to converse with them on personal religion. I felt reconciled

[1] He was admitted to Park-street church, Boston, in December, 1832.

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to the holiness and justice of God, and that it would be right in him to cast me from his presence. Since that time I have had occasional doubts with regard to my christian character, but have had clearer views than ever of the nature of sin and holiness, and of the divine perfections."

Soon after his conversion, he derived great benefit from Spring's Essays on the Distinguishing Traits of Christian Character. "I used," he said, "to take down the book, from its particular place on a particular shelf, every Sunday, and bring my mind to its severe scrutiny; and if during the week, I was tempted to sin, a glance at the book on the shelf, would, as its contents frowned through the cover, deter me." One of his most characteristic letters, written about this period, is on the importance of secret prayer, and he appears to have commenced his religious life with excellent plans in reference to this duty. He adhered to them with exactness until his death. The effect of his conversion upon his intellectual character was marked. He became more manly and mature. He also became more and more gentle in his temper, and more ready to turn the other cheek to his smiting playmate. In one of the most characteristic letters of his childhood he writes to a relative, "A little boy from Boston, whose parents I believe you know very well, but whose name I believe I will not mention here, a few days ago, as I was playing with him, because I did something that he did not like, called me 'religious,' thinking that he would plague me. But, in fact, it was one of the best names I had ever received. It was the first time that I ever heard any one call me so." "This trivial passage I have mentioned now, not that I think that in itself it deserves a relation, but because as the sun is seen best at his rising and setting, so men's native dispositions are clearliest perceived whilst they are children, and when they are dying. These little, sudden actions are the greatest discoverers of men's true humors."[1]

[1] Words of Robert Boyle.

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In August, 1831, he left the school at Mt. Pleasant, where it may be said of him, as Izaak Walton said of one before him, "The beauties of his pretty behavior and wit shined, and became so eminent and lovely, in this his innocent age, that he seemed to be marked out for piety, and to become the care of Heaven, and of a particular good angel to guard and guide him. And thus he continued in that school, till he came to be [accomplished] in the learned languages, and especially in the Greek tongue, in which he after proved an excellent critic."

MR. HOMER'S EARLY YOUTH, AND RESIDENCE AT AMHERST COLLEGE.

The biography of a man of letters may often be comprised in these words: he was born, he studied, he published, he died. Of Mr. Homer, it can scarcely be said that he published; for he shrunk with peculiar sensitiveness from any exposure of his compositions to public criticism.[1] There is no remarkable feat of his performance, no foreign travel, not even a personal accident, not so much as the overturning of a stage-coach in which he was journeying, nor the loss of a book, nor a week of serious illness, nor any imminent danger or hair-breadth escape, which can be mentioned to change the scene in the drama of his life. His whole biography must be spun out from his intellectual and hidden existence. It is generally said of him by those who watched his earlier years, that he was a happy and a faultless boy. Not that he was free from sin, but that the graces of his character so won upon his observers that his foibles were less distinctly

[1] He wrote several anonymous articles for the newspapers, and for the Shrine, a College periodical; a brief review of Tappan on the Will for the Biblical Repository, and a few notes on the poet Homer, for Professor Fiske's edition of Eschenburg's Manual of Classical Literature.

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noticed. Not but that he had his hours of trouble and complaining; but ordinarily his life was blithesome and joyous.

After leaving Mt. Pleasant in August, 1830, he pursued his classical studies in Boston until September, 1831. The succeeding year he spent at Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass. Toward the close of the academical year, he was appointed to pronounce the valedictory addresses at the ensuing anniversary of the school. All of his class being older than himself, some of them by six or seven years, and most of them being far more manly than himself in stature and appearance, he recoiled from this exercise, and endeavored to obtain release from it. But there was no exemption; and with heartfelt pain he appeared on the platform at the head of his class.

From Phillips Academy he removed to Amherst College, which he entered in September, 1832. Here he felt at home. This was the spot of his literary and religious nativity. He loved the quiet of its groves, the richness of its valleys, the graceful curvatures of the mountains that are round about it, and the sacred trains of thought that are suggested by the neighboring spires, the still villages, and the river that winds calmly by them. During his four collegiate years he resided in a private house, at a distance from the college buildings; and although some of his fellow students who lived in those buildings would often find it difficult to hear the prayer bell in the morning, he had a quick ear in that regard, nor was he tardy in obeying the summons. It is easy for a student to become a sincere invalid on a cold morning, when some recondite lesson is to be recited; but Mr. Homer never understood the conveniences of college sickness, and his slender form would press its way through the snow-drift and against the driving sleet, just as if there were but one course possible to be pursued, and that the course of duty. Says the President of the institution, "When Mr. Homer entered college, he sustained a fine examination, and though he had several worthy competitors, he soon took the first rank in his class,

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which he held to the end of his collegiate course. This he did, not by any intuitive and mysterious process, but by diligent application to study. He never dreamed, I believe, that he was a genius, even in his Freshman year, when so many flatter themselves that 'they are the people, and wisdom will die with them.' Whatever shorter road there may be to the temple of science, he never troubled himself to inquire for it, but was content to toil on in the old beaten track. He made it a rule to get every lesson, and to get it well. I doubt whether he ever made a poor recitation while he was in college."

"In the forms and syntax of Latin and Greek," says Professor Fiske, "he was more thorough than is common, even among those generally accounted good scholars. Yet his mind never seemed to rest satisfied with a mere mastery of his author's constructions. He had a singular felicity in penetrating the spirit of an ancient idiom, and bringing it out to view, and commending it to the feelings by an appropriate modern phraseology. When he had failed of making the full analysis of a construction, and did not detect all the elements of it until he had received hints or questions at the moment of reciting, it was sometimes delightful to notice how he would eagerly seize them, and comprehend at once the force and significancy of the combination, and present the meaning with singular perspicuity and elegance, clothing every idea with a fascinating drapery at the very instant of its conception. This could not fail to be observed by his companions; perhaps it was more fully appreciated by the teacher. If I sometimes helped him in breaking the shell, he always seemed to find a sweeter meat than I had tasted. While he had a strong relish for poetic beauty, and possessed an imagination highly active, and truly rich in ideal pictures, he had also a striking fondness for exact thought, and for lucid order and symmetry in arrangement, and neatness and accuracy in style and performance."

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In Mental and Moral Philosophy he took a pleasing interest, and some of his essays in this department would not have dishonored him at the age of twenty-four. When he had finished Butler's Analogy, he remarked, that his closing lesson was but the beginning of his attention to that book, that he should pursue the study of it as long as he lived; and it is an interesting fact, that this was one of the last books which he studied, and among the last notes which he left in pencilling, were notes upon his favorite Analogy.

He never resorted to any dishonorable means for obtaining the favor of his teachers, but he treated them with spontaneous affection and respect. He considered who they were and where they were, and honored their office as well as their character. He looked with utter contempt upon those notions of smartness, with which young men, especially from our cities, are often possessed, and by which they are led to disturb the order of college. When any youthful hero deemed it a point of honor for him to oppose the discipline of his teachers, he was taught by Mr. Homer that such bravery is a low and craven spirit; that the true courage of a student consists in getting his lessons, and if one wishes to do some great thing, and make himself known as superior to vulgar prejudices, he must move when the bell calls him, and keep his door closed in study hours, and take off his hat when he meets a superior.

He mingled in the social circles at college with chastened hilarity. In the literary associations he held a conspicuous place. He joined in their debates with enthusiasm, and bore the conflict of opinion with marked urbanity. He was chosen president of the Athenian Society, the Chi Delta Theta, and the Society of Inquiry, all of which he aided by his generosity as well as zeal. He had much of the *esprit-du-corps* in relation to the college, and appeared to study not more for his own good, than to advance the literary character of the institution. Several brief notices which he published in the

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newspapers, show how jealous he was for the honor of his *Alma Mater*. He early endeavored to promote an interest in it among its Alumni, and to strengthen the tie of brotherhood that united them.

No one was ever more sincerely attached to his class-mates than Mr. Homer. Writing from Andover Theological Seminary, he says, "I love Amherst more and more every day, and with something of the sensitive affection of a homesick child. I have not yet removed myself so far from the beautiful associations of my college life, but that I can truly say, that 'distance lends enchantment to the view.' The little items of difficulty, which form the dark shades of the picture, are growing dimmer and dimmer, and the outline is rising in graceful proportion. I look back upon our class as one beautiful whole, imperfect without its imperfections. I may find noble spirits here, but none nobler than theirs; warm hearts, but nowhere a kinder and more cheering sympathy."

Again he writes, "I assure you I have formed no friendships here, (Andover), which can compare with the friendships of college life. There is no *sentiment* about this remark. I love those old associations with a chaste and manly affection. I never expect any other scenes to come back upon my mind with such refreshing power. Have you ever begun with Freshman year, and traced down the history of your mind, your opinions, your intimacies, to the very last? It is queer, but affecting. I rather suspect that not a man who graduated with us I could meet without a peculiar grasp of the hand, and an uncommon throbbing of the heart. There were some men in our class whom I never did like, and perhaps I never can. But I never can call such men hard names. I rather think if I should meet such a one now, my eye would say *brother*, and my heart would beat *brother*, though my tongue did not utter the word."

Amid all the rivalries and jealousies, the debates and turmoils of collegiate life, Mr. Homer preserved that sweetness

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and serenity of spirit, which the religion of Jesus is so well fitted to impart. He did not lose his love of home, a love which seldom exists in a vicious mind, and ill comports with the envy and rancor of aspirants for collegiate honors. The following letter, written during his last year at college, is but one among numerous specimens of the pure out-flowings of his soul.

"December 13, 1835. My dear mother,—I presume that you were at Natick on Thanksgiving day. If so, your thoughts were undoubtedly in the same place with mine. Both of us, though absent in the body, were present in spirit at home. There is no time, when my mind lingers so tenaciously upon the associations which I have left behind, and I am so ready to say, 'O that I had wings like a dove,' that I might fly away to mingle with them once more. I could not forbear the recollection, that on each of the last two anniversary seasons, there was one in our group who met with us for the last time. The scene was participated in by those who were almost disembodied spirits,—just lingering a moment before finally withdrawing themselves from our view. I was speaking of our regard for home being enhanced by absence. I have sometimes thought that the principle may be applied to our experience respecting that better home, with reference to which we are 'strangers and pilgrims' here. I know not but that it may be a visionary idea, but it is one of those trains of thought which I love to pursue. It seems to me that if we ever arrive at heaven, when our toils and sufferings here are all over, our enjoyment must be higher than that of angels who have never left their Father's presence. To them he can say, as in the parable of the prodigal son, 'Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.' But we have just arrived from our long and toilsome pilgrimage. Here we were with all our cares and sorrows, 'without were fightings, within were fears;' and our sole comfort found in the anticipation of the rest that was in reserve for us. When the anticipation comes to be realized, and we find how infinitely the reality exceeds the expectation, and how gloriously faith is swallowed up in sight, it seems to me that our joy must be more ecstatic, as our redemption is more wonderful. But perhaps this is unprofitable speculation, and I was led into it before I was aware. It is sufficient for us if we do keep our eyes fixed steadfastly upward, and our souls longing for a release.

I thank you very much for the extract you sent me from the Life of

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Parsons. You judged rightly in supposing it applicable to me. I have wished again and again that I might recommence my Senior year. Every day seems to augment the proof, that it is a season when the moral impressions of college life are most deep and permanent, when the religion of the heart is assuming its shape and character for life. And how important is each day and each year becoming, as the preparation for the great work, for which I am preparing, approaches its completion. Whatever of worldly ambition may have prompted me hitherto, should here be cast aside as an unholy and unbecoming principle. This is the time for self-sacrifices, for withdrawal from the world, for a new and more binding covenant with God. I know it all, I can write it all, I can say it all, but I do not realize it. I would not venture to lay hold on the ark of God with unholy hands, and yet I may, unless I search my heart, and look upward for purifying power."

Mr. Homer was graduated at Amherst, in September, 1836. The valedictory honors of his class were assigned him, though he had repeatedly expressed his wish that they might be awarded to another person whom he esteemed more worthy of them. He was so much affected by the scenes of his graduation, that he failed to pronounce his addresses with sufficient strength of voice. Soon afterward, he writes to a college friend, "I had long anticipated the day of our graduation as a solemn and overwhelming occasion to my sensibilities, but the anticipation exceeded the reality. There was too close and too rapid a succession of exciting topics, each of which occurring alone would have been sufficient to prostrate me. My mind lost the discipline, my feelings avoided the shock which would otherwise have resulted. That was a solemn hour when we stood up together for the last time, with the silver cord just loosed, that had bound us so long. *Men* would not look upon us in that associate capacity henceforward,—*God* would so look upon us forever. But to us and the interesting audience that surrounded us, that scene, and—hurrying through the lightning-like course of time which would ensue, —the last trumpet which alone could call us all together

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again,—how intimately connected! But I did not realize it at the time."

MR. HOMER IN A REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

On a Sabbath morning in the early part of his Freshman year, Mr. Homer was called upon to offer a prayer at a public religious meeting. Being youthful and diffident, he declined the service. A member of an advanced class rose soon afterward, and uttered a severe reproof of those Freshmen who refused to take their part in leading the devotions of the students. This public reproof wounded Mr. Homer so deeply, that he could not, for a long time, attend the Sabbath morning prayer-meeting without uneasiness; and so different was he, in his tastes and education, from many of his brethren, that he did not associate with them so much as his higher interests required. Hence, for a year or more, he was less active in their promiscuous assemblies, than he might have been wisely. His religious life, though a guileless, was yet a hidden one. He attended with conscientious regularity the Saturday evening prayer-meeting of his classmates, for with them he could feel at home. But in his Junior year, he began to emerge from his retirement, and to lose somewhat of the sensitiveness which had deterred him from conspicuous effort. In November, 1834, he was deeply saddened by the death of his classmate, Mr. P. C. Walker. He did not lose the religious influence of this bereavement for a long time, and it gradually prepared him to participate in a religious revival which occurred soon afterward in college. Among the documents that he preserved with especial care is found the following paper, which is marked "private," and which no one ever heard of before his death.

"Amherst College, March 27, 1835.—The Lord has in great mercy come very near to this institution. There has existed in the minds o

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his children, for nearly two weeks past, a solemn sense of the presence of the influences of the Holy Spirit which has almost prostrated them in the dust. Many who were wandering like lost sheep, have been once more gathered to the fold of the blessed Redeemer, and have had restored to them the joys of their first love. The operation of these sacred influences I seem to have felt, stealing its way through the adamantine casement which the world has thrown about my heart, and waking me from the sinful lethargy which has so long paralyzed my spiritual energies. I think I have had some sense of my own weakness and vileness, and have been led to prostrate myself at the foot of the cross, to seek for pardon and for grace to renovate the man of sin within me. I pray for a more overwhelming view of my past criminality and worthlessness, and for a more fixed determination to consecrate all my powers to God's service, to be his for time, and his for eternity. Believing that it would be for my own spiritual advantage to have by me a written covenant, into which I desire solemnly to enter in the presence of God, of the blessed Redeemer and of the Holy Spirit, I pray for their guidance and their blessing, while I append my name to the following resolutions:

Resolved,—that Christ and his cause shall claim the first attention of my thoughts, and that it shall be my daily prayer, 'Lord what wilt thou have me to do,' for the honor of thy name, this day?

Resolved,—that I will pray more fervently to be delivered from that devotion to the world, which would cause its miserable vanities to usurp the place in my affections which Christ ought to occupy,—that I may live as a stranger and a pilgrim who seeks a city yet to come.

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only THEE."

Resolved,—that it shall be my prayerful endeavor so to aspire after holiness, and a constantly increasing assimilation to the divine character, as to be able to sympathize with the Psalmist of Israel in those spiritual longings so beautifully expressed,—'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.'

Resolved,—that I will be engaged in no occupation upon which I cannot ask for God's blessing; and that I will strive to make study a christian duty, upon the performance of which I may enter with humble prayer for the divine assistance, and for the acquisition of that

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intellectual discipline which will better prepare me to answer the great end of my being.

Resolved,—that I will strive to have my intercourse with my fellow students a christian intercourse; that my conversation shall evince that the great subject of religion is uppermost in my thoughts, and I may be enabled consistently to recommend a serious consideration of its claims to all who know not God, and obey not the gospel.

The task is a great one, and the responsibility of such solemn vows is too awful for a weak and vile worm like myself. But my hope is not in an arm of flesh. I look to heaven for help.

And now, Lord God, draw nigh and witness the consecration. Blessed Saviour, seal it with thy blood. Holy Ghost, sanctify it to my heart.

Signed, WILLIAM BRADFORD HOMER."

Mr. Homer's activity in this revival was prudent and cheerful. He not only forebore to make unseemly aggressions upon the tastes of his comrades, but he dissuaded others from making them. He was sagacious in his plans for obtaining access to those who had previously been impervious to right influences. Those who were unused to the stimulus of a revival, and, from their temperament, were in danger of being neglected by some and irritated by others, found in him a friend, liberal, generous, affectionate, faithful, unsparing. The following letters show how far he was from spiritual indifference on the one hand, and fanaticism on the other. To his mother he writes:

"April 9, 1835.—I presume from the reports that have been circulated, that you have been anxiously looking for information of what the Lord is doing for us; and I am happy in the confidence that you are among the mothers who never forget to pray for the spiritual prosperity of this institution. Although the information I am able to communicate is not so cheering as I could wish, and the work has not yet assumed that marked and prominent character which would render publicity expedient, I have felt unable to suffer you to remain any longer in uncertainty as to our situation; but I must request, for reasons which will be very manifest, that you do not permit this letter to go from the family, and that no further use be made of its contents,

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than to stimulate Christians to pray that we may have a more powerful manifestation of grace than we have yet experienced. That there has been here for some weeks past, a very special influence operating upon the heart, almost every member of college can testify from his own experience. And that we have enjoyed, and are still enjoying, a revival of religion, in the strictest sense of the term, no one who has witnessed the revival of the languishing graces of God's children, and the deep humiliation and contrite repentance of those who had wandered far, and forgotten their first love, can deny. Such a solemn sense of responsibility, and such a spirit of prayer as seems to have pervaded the church, I have never before seen exhibited. Nor are we entirely destitute of encouragement to labor and pray for the conversion of our impenitent fellow students, for we trust there are a few who have been recently brought from nature's darkness to the marvelous light of the gospel. The subjects of the work are sufficiently numerous to make us all grateful, and few enough to impress upon us the importance of continuing to wrestle in prayer, until many are brought to yield to the influences of the Holy Spirit in his present gracious visitation. I believe there is a general determination on the part of Christians, to persevere in their prayers and their efforts for the salvation of souls. We are in an extremely critical situation, but there can be no doubt, from the manifestations we have already had of God's willingness to bless us, that if we will but continue to be prayerful and faithful, the work will go on with still greater power. That we may be prepared for duty, we need the prayers of all who have an interest at the throne of grace. I presume you are ready to inquire what has been the influence of all this upon my own religious feelings, and whether my heart is in the work. I humbly trust that it has been blest to me, in tearing me, in some measure, from my attachment to the world, and aiding me in an entire consecration of myself to the service of Christ. It seems to me now, that I can occasionally have a glimpse of the unspeakable glory of living for Christ, and then the vanities which have so long engrossed my attention, appear in their real insignificance, and I can feel a desire to be entirely devoted to his service. But I am weak, and the deceitfulness of my heart makes me fear that the impressions I have received may be transient, and the idols I have cherished so long, may again resume their place, and leanness once more be sent upon my soul. I am disheartened and discouraged except when I look to the promises of the gospel, and find that if I will but be faithful there is no danger of fainting, for they that wait on the Lord shall run and not be weary, and walk and not faint. And I de-

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rive encouragement from the thought, that you will not forget to pray, that I may not suffer this season to pass without becoming permanently holier and better."

April 28, 1835, he thus writes to his father: "The solemnity still continues in college. There have been, as we hope, about twenty conversions, of which six are in our class. Perhaps, however, it would not be best to say anything of this publicly. We hope to see still more of our classmates and friends becoming the subjects of renewing grace before the close of the term; but there must be much prayer, or the numerous anxieties and anticipations incident upon the close of the term, will oblige many to suffer this precious harvest-time to close without securing the salvation of their souls. With regard to myself, I feel unworthy to say anything, but I cannot refrain from expressing an humble hope, that this may constitute an era in my religious course. It has been to me, in all probability, the most important and interesting season of my life. But I feel miserably weak, and when I look forward to the temptations that await me, I tremble at the possibility of my so treating the influences of the Spirit, as to lose their permanent and lasting advantage. Such contemplations will serve, as I trust, to give me an entire sense of my dependence on Him in whom alone is my hope."

Four years afterward, he writes, April 26, 1839, "I look back upon the college revival, as one of the most critical periods of my whole religious history. I feel deeply guilty that I did not avail myself more fully of the unusual opportunity afforded for benefiting myself and others; but I bless God for what he permitted me to gain. For worlds I would not have lived through that scene in coldness and stupidity, or lost the rich gifts it renewed to my soul."

Mr. Homer was not insensible to the objections which are frequently urged against revivals of religion, and especially in our colleges. During one period of his residence at Andover, he was unduly influenced by these objections, but he at length recovered from their power. "God," he wrote, "has come so close to my own fire-side, that I cannot question the reality of his interposition." In an animated controversy, an opposer of such excitements remarked to him, that these re-

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vivals generally occurred in the second term of the college year, and it was unreasonable to suppose that the influences of the Divine Spirit were limited to the months of March, April and May. But to this he replied, that during the first term the students were unacquainted with each other, a new class having recently entered; that during the third term, there was a great tendency to dissipation of mind, in consequence of the warmth of the season, the frequent allurements to places of festivity, the approach of commencement, and the preparation of one class for departure from college; that the second term was the only one remaining unbroken, and presenting those still scenes which ever invite the Spirit of peace. The physical condition of the students also, during this term, fits them peculiarly for religious contemplations. To the objection, that these revivals interrupted the scholar's progress in study, he replied, that the evil, though often an attendant, was an unnecessary one; that the religious excitement would be more protracted and more healthful if the students continued a moderate application to their classics; that he himself endeavored to preserve as much regularity in his scientific pursuits during a revival, as during a period of religious apathy, and that, in some respects, his mind was better fitted for study by the extraordinary efforts of the conference and inquiry room. To the objection that there was too great an accumulation of incentive applied to the mind of an impenitent student at such a time, too many and too earnest exhortations addressed to him, he replied, that this also need not be; that prudence was needful on the part of Christians, and was easy to be exercised; that they need not and should not converse at hap-hazard with their fellows tudents, but should know what had been previously said, and what was now important to be added; that the christian scholar should be peculiarly delicate in his approaches to his companions, and should insinuate his exhortations, rather than cast them abruptly upon

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the mind, and that he should practise all those winning graces of manner which will allure to a pleasant consideration of a theme naturally distasteful.

HABITS OF SELF-CONTEMPLATION.

There is so little of outward adventure in the life of a student, that he forms the habit of turning his eye inward. He is not carried along with the whirl of business, so as to preclude his frequent questionings with himself, Who am I? Where, whence am I? Whither, how am I going? And when his prospects for mental improvement are darkened, when disease threatens to cripple his intellect, or misfortune closes the volume of wisdom to his eyes, he has misgivings of heart which he will tell of to no one but his God. The most touching words ever penned by Buckminster, are those which he wrote in his twenty-first year, when he began to feel the premonitions of a wasting intellect. "I pray God," he writes, "that I may be prepared, not so much for death, as for the loss of health, and, perhaps, of mental faculties. The repetition of these fits must, at length, reduce me to idiocy. Can I resign myself to the loss of memory, and of that knowledge I may have vainly prided myself upon? O God! enable me to bear this thought, and make it familiar to my mind, that by thy grace I may be willing to endure life, as long as thou pleasest to lengthen it. It is not enough to be willing to leave the world, when God pleases; we should be willing, even to live useless in it, if he, in his holy providence, should send such a calamity upon us. I think I perceive my memory fails me. O God save me from that hour!"

The subject of this memoir was fond of looking within himself, of measuring his capacities, of scanning his faults and scrutinizing the probable grounds of his future failures or successes. Nor were his self-contemplations always healthful. He had too many forebodings that his youthful promise

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would not be realized in his subsequent attainments. It cannot be said that he had been a child of precocious genius. He had performed no intellectual feat like that of Hartley, who devised the plan of his great work, while at the age of nine or ten he was swinging on his father's gate, or of Robert Hall, who read the profoundest treatises in our language before he had reached his eleventh year; but there had been an uncommon balance of the mental and moral powers in the childhood of Mr. Homer, and also a maturity of religious principle. He had been still and retiring while other children were leaping in the ring, and he had attained more symmetry of mental character, and a more complete scholarship, than others of greater native talent and less industry. It was not singular, that with his meditative cast of mind, he should often inquire whether his known superiority were merely ephemeral, depending entirely on his factitious advantages and on youthful impulses. There is an excellence which belongs to a young man and fades away with advancing years, or even becomes a fault at middle age. Many who have possessed it, and have died in the morning of life, acquired a greater distinction than they could have retained; and their early death was the seal of their future fame. Mr. Homer often feared that his own mental acquisitions would be less useful in manhood, than they were flattering in his minority. The very existence of his fears indicates that they were groundless. His mental course was onward till his dying day, and his attainments were both designed and fitted for future usefulness more than for present distinction. His efforts were *preparatory*. The most labored part of his writings was in the form of hints and notes for future use. His eye was fixed upon manhood as the harvest season, for which, in the springtime of life, he must sow the seed with diligence. But the character of his studies did not remove the fear, that the indications of his youth would be remembered as the buddings of a flower that never blossomed. He meditated more on the

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early history of those remarkable children who never became remarkable men, than on the childhood of Des Cartes, Bacon, Boyle, Newton, Jones, Johnson, Franklin, and indeed a majority of our intellectual masters. Sometimes, in the twilight, he would be found sitting in his room alone and pensive. He would not disclose his sorrows, but he had been holding converse with his past hours, and learning from them the vanity of even the joys that were in store. Sometimes would he be seen walking in solitude and with a downcast look; and the saddened tones of his voice would show that his thoughts had been wandering amid the dark scenes of life. Often, when a question was put to him, it would remain unanswered longer than politeness allowed, for he was absorbed in some meditations that he could not express. But occasionally he would open his heart to a friend, and tell the results of his introspection and retrospection. "To-day," he says, "I have been reading over the compositions of my childhood. They form the most instructive volume in my library. They teach me to be humble, and to fear God, and to trust in heaven, and to lay up no treasures on the earth." A few passages from his letters, written at Amherst and Andover, will unfold his habit of religious meditation, his love of introverting the mental eye, and his tendency to that occasional gloom, which is either the prerogative or the misfortune of sensitive men.

"April 20, 1834. (Sophomore year at college).—Spring has just begun to bud and blossom in Amherst, and we are now in the enjoyment of the most delightful weather. A few weeks will close a term in some respects eventful, and will find me I fear, but a few steps on my way, and with far less advancement in spiritual character than I have had opportunity to make. How much do these rapid transitions from term to term in college, remind one of the changes of life. All pass rapidly away. It seems but a few days since I was a thoughtless, light-minded school-boy, and now I am just beginning to think of the great object of my existence. It will be but a short time, before college scenes and college studies will give place to the more important

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preparation for the duties of a profession. Then will come life,—to which all that has preceded, has been but as the preface of a book. Read a few pages and you come to the conclusion—*death!* What creatures we are! And in view of the vanity of our lives, how ready ought we to be to give ourselves up entirely to the service of God."

June 23, 1834. "I am this term alone, as I mentioned in my last, and it is my present intention to remain so, if circumstances permit, through the remainder of my college course. I have had as kind and pleasant a room-mate as I could have wished, but I am extremely doubtful as to the general influence of that close and uninterrupted companionship, upon persons in my situation. There is unquestionable benefit to be derived from such a plan, but I think it is more than over-balanced by the opportunity afforded in a solitary room for that silent and uninterrupted meditation, which is so necessary to the student. Not that I am becoming a hermit, for there is enough of the bustle of society for any one, when I am obliged to leave my room and mingle in college associations. But when I return, instead of finding more society there, I ought to be *alone*, and in retirement to ponder the lessons on human character, which may have been thrown in my way when I have been abroad. I am certainly surrounded at present with all the advantages I could possibly enjoy, and I trust I shall be enabled to make a right use of them."

September 6, 1835, to a college classmate: "Could you read my thoughts as they had been a book, for the past week, you would find something to laugh at, something to frown at, something to weep at, and, if I mistake not your (temperament), something in hieroglyphics which you could not decipher or understand. And now what and where am I? I look to the past, to its solemn vows of consecration, of non-conformity, to its bitter experiences of sin and temptation and disappointment. I look to the future,—a few days of misty and uncertain prospect, but the great universal 'vanishing-point' of eternity just as sure as my own existence. I look to the bible, and the words 'strangers and pilgrims' meet my eye. 'Strangers and pilgrims!' and, blessed be God, that is not all; but,—'who seek a city yet to come, even a heavenly,' where there is a balm for every wound, a pillow for every weary one. 'Strangers and pilgrims!' and I have been thinking to-night how foolish we are in idealizing what is but earthly at best, and when we are not content with present realities, reveling in what must be, of its very nature, not a whit more substantial, instead of making our imaginations the temple of the spiritual man.

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But I fear this is a misty sentence. I simply mean, my friend, that the Christian can and ought to build his castles not in air, but in heaven."

In the same year he writes to a classmate, "There have been days when I was almost sad that my life had not terminated with my college course, for I felt that I was doomed to a puny growth, and it would have been a relief to me if my death rather than my life should crush the hopes of my friends. But that was sinful pride. I knew it. I did try to leave the discouragements which, in a morbid multitude, seemed to be pressing upon me. And if anything gave me relief it was submission to the will of a divine and merciful Parent. I feel some happiness in such submission. There will be moments when peace will be whispered to the most agitated bosom,—in prayer. And remember, there is one whose imperfect petitions often mingle with his own desires, the thought of your growth in holiness, your crown in heaven."

February 6, 1836. (Senior year at college.)—"The present term has opened quite pleasantly and promises to be one of great labor. I mean that it shall be with me. It mortifies me excessively when I look back on the three years and a half which I have spent in the enjoyment of these advantages for improvement, and find how I have frittered myself away. More than all it humbles me when I think how little I have penetrated my own heart; what small progress I have made in self-acquaintance, and how needful it is for me, in order to repress my pride, to think often and solemnly of the weak points in my character. It is not with you[1] as it has been with me. You have just commenced your course, while I can think of myself only as about to close an important part of mine. College life has been to me a sort of parenthesis, distinct in itself, yet useful chiefly in its bearings upon what succeeds. It should be a great preparatory school, not merely in the intellectual discipline which it affords, or the knowledge which it imparts, but in the science of self-government of which the principles are here developed, to the perception of all who have ears to hear and eyes to see. But when I remember how often I have closed my mind against the rich lessons which I might have learned, and how little effort I have been making to apply the experience of my daily life to the great business of knowing and mastering myself,

[1] Mr. James G. Brown.

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I confess I am fearful that I am not ready for the responsibilities of an educated man, more than all, of a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Time is hastening me on to the close of my college life. I seem to stand on an eminence. The great field of my anticipated labor with its rich and waving harvest meets my eye, but how little does it affect my heart! O let me improve each moment as it passes, in preparation for that glorious work. Let me gird on the gospel implements and prepare to thrust in the sickle. Let me labor long and unwearied-ly where my great Master shall direct. And then when that life, of which the four years of my college course are an emblem, shall also be closing, and I stand straining my eye for the prospect of my eternal home, richer fields and golden harvests may be spread out before the vision of my faith. Excuse, my dear friend, these rambling thoughts, which interest me, I am well aware, more than they do you; but if by communicating, I can fix them more deeply in my own heart, you will not be altogether uninterested."

"Feb. 18, 1837. (Junior year at Andover).—Last Tuesday was the most miserable day I ever experienced. I arose in the morning jaded and depressed. It was the turn of the eighty-eighth Psalm to present itself to my devotional meditations, and it seemed a remarkable providence, as a more precise and accurate mirror of my own feelings could nowhere have been selected. It was no religious exercise, I frankly own, but in the solitude of my gloom, I am almost ashamed to confess it, I did pour out my soul like water over that Psalm. Such prospects of discouragement as pressed themselves upon me, I pray to be relieved from henceforth and forever. There is one dreadful thought, that at such moments comes upon my mind. I would whisper it in your ear. It is that my mind has already reached its maturity, that I shall never grow to a larger than my present intellectual stature. My developments were early, perhaps too early. I have always been beyond my years. And you know that it is no unusual phenomenon that minds too soon matured are of a stinted growth, and those who were men in boyhood become boys in manhood. I know that this is a wicked thought. It may be the conception of a diseased imagination. It undoubtedly is the offspring of a pride of intellect, rather than of that humble and submissive spirit which bows in meek resignation to the will of God. But it is a dreadful thought in itself, and in its accompaniments, when I think of the disappointment of the affectionate hopes that have been centred in me. God forgive me, if I ever think of honoring the earthly objects of my love more than the heavenly."

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July 1, 1840. (Senior year at Andover.)—"In a late singular book, there is one passage that speaks to my own spiritual condition, and has sometimes touched my heart with a power that is almost wild.—'Look not mournfully into the past. It comes not back again. Wisely improve the present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy future, without fear and with a manly heart.'"

It may be said that some of the foregoing passages betray pride and ambition in their author. He had some pride; and who has not; who, especially, that has enjoyed a life of uniform distinction? But it was not pride, far from it; it was meekness, and modesty, and an humble temper, that characterized his daily intercourse. True, he had a high self-respect, and it raised him above the meannesses to which a selfish man is prone. His keen sense of honor answered the purpose of a second conscience, and he was too high-minded to flatter or to prevaricate or connive at any sly and insidious manoeuvre. He was too proud to make any use of Lord Bacon's maxim, that "the best composition and temperature is to have openness in fame and opinion, secrecy in habit, dissimulation in seasonable use, and a power to feign if there be no remedy." He was frank because he respected himself, but whenever he found that his self-esteem was becoming inordinate, he employed expedients too humiliating to be related, for subduing the evil.

That he had some ambition too, will not be denied. Sensitiveness was his permeating quality, and as he was sensitive to everything else, so was he to the esteem of his fellow men. Having a strong aspiration after all good, he was not regardless of the good there is in the esteem of the wise. The love of excelling he considered an original principle of our nature, not to be eradicated, but controlled. He did not pretend to have banished it from himself, as some men have pretended, and have therefore courted the praise of the world for their superiority to the love of praise; but he struggled and prayed that his native desire of excellence might be turned into the

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channel of virtue, and operate as a simple desire of rising in holiness and in the favor of God. During a long and confiding intimacy with him, I never detected the least symptom of envy, nor any inclination to an artifice for self-promotion. I never heard him whisper a syllable against any one who might be considered his rival, but he always extolled his companions in proportion as they came near or went beyond his own attainments. He was more fond of confessing a fault than of pretending to a virtue, and he often acknowledged his ignorance, but seldom told of his acquisitions. It seemed that his desire of excelling so far as it degenerated into a faulty ambition, was far less faulty than the indolence of those who fear to move upward lest they should become vain and airy, and therefore sink downward into an imbecile and stupid life.

It may be objected, that the secret confessions of fault which the preceding letters contain should not be exposed to the world. They would not be, if the present memoir were designed for a eulogy. They would not be, if the character of its subject needed to be glossed over and his foibles artfully concealed. But of what advantage is a biography above a fictitious tale, when but half the truth is told, and the character of a man is painted as that of an angel? The christian philosopher objects to novels because they give false views of life and benumb our sympathies with man as he is actually found. And what are too many of our biographies but likenesses of nothing which is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth? The true idea of a memoir is, that it shall impart the general and combined impression of its subject, that it shall give no undue prominence to his foibles, nor make a needless exposure of his uncovered sins, and shall by no means imply that a man may live selfishly among us, and be canonized when he has gone from us; that he may sin cunningly here, and only his virtues shall be rehearsed hereafter. As the love of posthumous favor is one

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incentive to virtue, so the fear of censure from our survivors is a dissuasive from vice.

MR. HOMER AT THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

After his graduation, Mr. Homer was desired by some of his friends to spend a year in the instruction of youth. It was thought that his labors in such a sphere would help to prepare him for the hardnesses and conflicts of professional life. He had been in the schools from his early childhood, had encountered but little of the selfishness and bluntness of the world, and a divorcement from the select circles in which he had mingled would give him one important kind of discipline which thus far he had not received. But he was wedded to his studies, and the thought of interrupting them was more than his literary spirit could endure. He accordingly entered the Theological Seminary at Andover, in October, 1836. Soon after the commencement of his studies, he writes to an intimate friend,

November 4, 1836, "There is an altar to which we have common access. Remember me there. For myself, in the new and interesting situation in which I am placed, with my hand just touching the ark of God, and my mind advancing every day to the crisis of its development, I have never so deeply realized the necessity of looking upward for guidance and support. 'Without are fightings, within are fears.' A few weeks will undoubtedly decide whether I am to do much or little in my Master's service. And how consoling to me the reflection, that other hearts in christian sympathy are bearing the same burden to the same mercy seat. I have read somewhere, perhaps it is in Jeremy Taylor, that the union of prayer in Christians, (however widely separated), for the same object, is like the clouds of incense ascending from different altars, and in separate columns, but blending in rich and graceful harmony above."

December 18, 1836, he writes, "The work which I have in view seems every day to be enlarging before me, and I am constantly reminded of the importance of such industry and regularity as must op-

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erate as a check on many of my enjoyments. I believe that I have acquired some new views upon this subject, since I came to Andover, which make my college life and acquisitions look very insignificant. Yet it should always be my desire and aim, not to confine myself to mental cultivation, but to be making constant efforts for spiritual advancement, that I may grow in knowledge and in grace together."

Soon after he entered the institution, he began to meditate upon the course of his future life. He first attended to the claims of the heathen upon his services. He writes to two of his friends the following account of his meditations:

"February 12 and 18, 1837.—I mentioned to you just as we separated last Sunday evening, that my mind had been considerably occupied of late, with the claims of the missionary service. I prefer that you say nothing about it at present, as how soon, or how, the question may be decided is uncertain. On the first Monday in January last, (1837), I commenced the examination of the subject, without the least doubt as to the manner in which it would be settled. I tried to consider the subject prayerfully, and I confess my views and feelings did undergo a decided revolution. I found that some arguments which I had thought conclusive in favor of my remaining at home, were without foundation. I think that on that day, the attractions of home and country and friends, and the bright visions of future happiness which I had cherished, were robbed of their charm, and I saw the full wants of perishing millions, myself in darkness upon a single point."——"When the peculiar sensitiveness of my temperament, the strength of my attachment to home, the habit of *dependence* I had always cultivated, all seemed to hold me back, I asked myself if Henry Martyn had not these infirmities to a far greater extent, if he did not leave his home under circumstances more affecting and wounding to those sensibilities, than could accompany me, and did not God raise him above them all? With half his piety, with half his scholarship, with half his devotion to the work, a tenth part of neither of which I can now aspire to, yet by cultivation and industry and resolution I might attain, would not God bless my feeble labors, and make me in such a sphere a happy and a useful man? Ah, my dear friend, this is not a question between the infirmities of the flesh, and the claims of God, but between the opposing calls of duty; not a question between earthly enjoyment and self-sacrifice, but between duty and du-

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ty. Can I be more useful abroad than at home? Upon this now rests the whole question. My facility in the acquisition of languages would give me the advantage over many, perhaps over most that go on missions. But is my mind better adapted for communicating with such spirits as are found on heathen, or on christian shores? Can my influence be most extensive and most blessed abroad, or at home? Here I wait for light. The remarkable change which took place in my views when I prayed for divine direction, I am sometimes inclined to regard as the only indication which God will give of my personal duty. Yet I would not be hasty. A mistake abroad is worse than a mistake at home; the one may be rectified in time, the other never. If I could go with the assurance that I might strengthen the hands of my fellow laborers, instead of proving to them an insupportable burden, I believe in the view I have sometimes taken of earthly attachments, I could leave the brightest visions I have ever dwelt upon. What is life,—so short, and eternity so near at hand. If I have succeeded in making myself intelligible, write me your views upon the subject."

After a severe conflict between opposing claims, Mr. Homer finally concluded, that his duty was to remain at home. He next examined the question whether he should look to the ministry as the sphere of his principal labors, or to the office of a teacher; and he decided that his peculiar tastes and aptitudes promised him a greater degree of usefulness in the chair of instruction than in the pulpit. It became, therefore, his fixed purpose to qualify himself as far as he could in his leisure hours for the duties of a teacher. With this view he intended to pass two or three years at the German Universities, as soon as he had attained some experience in the ministry. He by no means meant to forego the privileges and the pleasures of a pastor's life; he chose to bear for a season the responsibilities of a parish minister; so might he become more familiar with the influences and the energies of the gospel, deepen his interest in the religious welfare of his race, and learn the sacred arts of persuading men to virtue. He wished, also, to enliven his sympathies with the various classes of men, and to acquire that freshness of feel-

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ing which the atmosphere of a literary institution needs rather than gives. By this discipline he hoped through the grace of God, to sanctify his literary influence.

In the spring of 1837, he left the seminary for a year, continuing his residence at Andover, and enjoying many privileges of the Institution. He adopted this plan, partly for the purpose of enjoying a more complete course of biblical instruction, than the ill health of Professor Stuart would allow him to give to the class with which Mr. Homer had been connected, partly for the purpose of privately reviewing his Hebrew studies, and writing analyses of several of the sacred books; and partly for a more enlarged and comprehensive investigation of both the classical and the sacred Greek. In addition to these labors, he paid some attention to the Arabic language, and still more to the German. During the year he was without any restraint save that of his own moral principle, but he never was more energetic or industrious. He was as methodical in the division of his time as if he were regulated by the seminary bell. In the course of this year, November 11, 1837, he writes as follows: "I have been very hard at work since my return with the exception of two or three days. Eleven hours in the day, from eight in the morning till ten in the evening, I devote to my studies. This I mention not from any feeling of vanity, but to show that I am not the *loafer* here that I am in Boston." When he had again connected himself with the seminary, he writes, "Yesterday I surrendered my liberty, that is, again made myself a subject of the laws of the Theological Seminary. I do not know how well I shall '*whip into the traces.*' The proof I have given of my ability to take care of myself, is no proof of the ability of the law to take care of me."

Indeed it was one of the marked features of Mr. Homer's mind to observe a strict regularity and order in all things. It was an instinct with him to act according to plan. He made no parade about it, he adhered to system because he

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loved system, because system grew with him and he with it. His whole life was mapped out before him, and to the hours of every day were assigned their respective labors. It is said of Dr. Kirkland, President of Harvard College, that "it was not uncommon for him to bring into the pulpit half a dozen sermons or more, and, on the instant, construct from their pages a new sermon as he went along, turning the leaves backwards and forwards, and connecting them together by the thread of his extemporaneous discourse. These scattered leaves resembled those of the Sybil, not only in their confusion, causing many to marvel how he could marshal and manage them so adroitly, but also in their deep and hidden wisdom, and in the fact that when two thirds of what he had thus brought into the pulpit was omitted,—thrown by as unworthy of delivery,—the remaining third which he uttered was more precious than the entire pile of manuscript, containing, as it did, the spirit and the essence, the condensed and concentrated wisdom of the whole."[1] Such a confusion of the materials of thought would be one of the last features of Mr. Homer's mind, even in an extreme old age. All his academy compositions he had arranged in one packet, his college compositions in another, his literary addresses, poetical effusions, etc. in a third; his notes upon his classical and theological studies he had accurately classified; his essays on the doctrines of the gospel were prepared as if for the press, and were preserved as the foundation of a series of doctrinal discourses which he had planned before the close of his middle year. Many of his manuscript sermons, though never copied, were written as if he were anticipating what was furthest possible from his thoughts, that they would be printed *verbatim et literatim*. In looking over his papers thus arranged and systematized, one would think of the remark made by Curran to Grattan, as one which never could

[1] Rev. Mr. Young's Discourse on the Life and Character of President Kirkland, p. 41.

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be made to Mr. Homer—"You would be the greatest man of our age, if you would buy up a few yards of red tape, and *tie up* your bills and papers."

While at Andover his mind seemed to acquire new rapidity of movement. It was surprising to his friends that he could accomplish so much. He kept himself minutely acquainted with the political news of the day, was familiar with its current literature; every new book which was published he would form some kind of acquaintance with, and was far as any one from neglecting the appropriate exercises of his class. All that he did he perfected with singular ease, seldom appeared to be hurried, but was happy with his books, and enjoyed them as companions.

Throughout his seminary, as well as his collegiate life, he avoided promiscuous company. From feeling rather than from principle, he followed the rule, "Be kind to all, friendly with some, intimate with few." He was too exclusive in his intercourse with certain companions in study, and he too seldom sought the acquaintance of others. Not that he was a recluse, or had the feelings or manners of an anchorite; he seemed to be familiar with the usages of the best society; but he lived above them, though not regardless of them, and preferred his intellectual pleasures to the intercourse of fashionable circles. To some of his friends he remarked, when a Senior at Amherst, "Yesterday, Mr. ——, by dint of long persuasion, induced me to get into a chaise with him and ride over to Hatfield. He wished, he said, to show me more of the world, than I had yet seen. I enjoyed my visit mightily, and formed a higher opinion of mankind than from the maxims of Rochefoucault I was expecting to form."

In the winter of Mr. Homer's Middle year at Andover, he received the appointment of Tutor at Amherst College. He was solicited, earnestly and repeatedly, by several of his friends at Amherst and Andover, to accept the appointment, but in vain. He had settled the plan of his future life,

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and no entreaties could prevail with him to relinquish or interrupt it. He thus writes on the subject to a classmate :— "You will no doubt be surprised at my decision to decline the Tutorship at Amherst. It is not a hasty one. I have had the subject before my mind ever since I left college, and have often anticipated the situation with great pleasure. But for almost a year it has been my undoubting conviction that my duty calls me immediately to complete my theological studies, and enter the profession where I doubt not my Master designs I should serve him for a season. I say *for a season*, for I ought not to conceal from you, what you have yourself once intimated, that I do not look upon the ministry as the sphere of my permanent operation, or greatest usefulness. The more full development of certain tastes, which were partially exhibited during my college course, has led me to apply myself almost exclusively to studies, which, while they delight and profit me, are, I would hope, furnishing me with some preparation to spend the greater part of my life among scenes which I was born for, and which I should delight to call my home."

The reader will be more readily let into Mr. Homer's study at Andover, by perusing a few extracts from his correspondence, than by any lengthened description.

"August 4, 1838.—As to the question of authorship, I have no intention at present, at least, of venturing into that uncertain wilderness. Of all subjects, the poet Homer would be the one I should choose, as I am better acquainted with it than with any other, and have furnished myself within a year or two with the materials for a pretty extensive work. But my purposes are far more modest. Having completed the writings attributed to Homer, I wished to satisfy myself upon the existence of such an individual. I have been for several weeks examining the German theory of Homer, and I have perfectly satisfied my mind that it is all moon-shine. I have come to the conclusion, not only that the Iliad is the single production of one author, but that in all probability the Iliad and Odyssey are the production of one and the same individual. I do rejoice, most heartily,

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in the ability to be in poetry, (not to speak it profanely), a monotheist. Excuse my egotism. I think I have heard you express a contrary opinion on this topic, and were it not for my utter detestation of literary correspondence, I should challenge you to an immediate discussion. Blackwell's work I have not yet read, but expect from it abundant entertainment."

"September 8, 1838.—I have recently obtained a complete list of Macaulay's articles, and have been reading them in course. There is a splendid article on Dryden, another on Johnson, another on Machiavelli, and another on Pitt, besides several grand historical articles. That is the man for me. We are endeavoring to get up an edition of his miscellaneous writings on a plan similar to Emerson's edition of Carlyle. 'Not that we love Caesar less, but that we love Rome more.' We have written to England to Macaulay and Lord Napier, (editor of the Edinburgh Review), and should we be thence encouraged to proceed, the work will go on without delay. A prospectus has already been somewhat prematurely issued by Weeks and Jordan of Boston."

"November 3, 1838.—I returned to this delightful spot, (Andover) a little more than a week ago, and am now regularly started in my course of study for the term. I occupy my forenoons with Theology, my afternoons with German, and my evenings with Demosthenes; which last I like hugely, as I find in the edition I purchased in Boston all the helps that a student can possibly need. With regard to text books in theology, I own Dick and Dwight, and have out of the library Knapp, Storr and Flatt, and Hopkins, as standard authorities, besides miscellaneous controversial documents on particular points. I consider Knapp as worth a thousand, and value him more than all the rest together. His chief excellence consists in exposing the loose reasoning of the advocates of truth, of which in ordinary theologians I find a great abundance. Dick is too little of a biblical scholar, and Dwight sometimes gives us a *non sequitur*, but Knapp clears away the wood, hay and stubble with which most other writers have decked up and fortified the gospel edifice, and shows us only the polished stones."

"June 8, 1839.—It is a long time since I addressed you from this solitary room. But here they all are, the books, the maps, the table and the inkstand, as I left them; and here I sit with my white jacket, before me the sheet that is my speaking-trumpet to you, behind me

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the open windows, the balmy air and the melody of birds. I have been hoping and praying that I may be enabled on the morrow to commence aright the duties of the new term."

"December 14, 1839.—Three of our students have formed a little coterie for the purpose of examining and discussing theological subjects. We meet twice a week at my room. We also have once a week an evening exercise in homiletics, at my room, when one of us recites the substance of an original discourse, the other two officiating as hearers."

"January 3, 1840.—I anticipate this as a year of thrilling interest to me, no doubt the most momentous of my life. It will be the year of my commission as a minister of God, the first year of the great work of my life. For the first time I shall emerge from the preparatory stages in which I have heretofore been occupied, and put on the garb of practical manhood."

"March 26, 1840.—I have now pretty much completed the severer duties of the term, having finished six sermons. I have been delivering two lectures on Jeremy Taylor before a select club. They were extemporaneous, and each two hours long."—"I have read seven critiques upon characters in Shakspeare before another club formed for English criticism. I am beginning to go for clubs and coteries. Solitary study I find does not bring out the whole man. Combine the solitary with the social is the rule."

From the preceding letters the reader will perceive, that notwithstanding Mr. Homer's intention to spend the greater part of his life in the chair of literary instruction, he yet applied himself to the duties of a preacher with all the enthusiasm which he had hitherto devoted to his more private studies. The laws of the Theological Seminary require each member of the Senior class to write four sermons during the year. This small number is demanded, because it is esteemed far more important for a minister, in his novitiate, to write well, than to write much. But Mr. Homer wrote three times the number of sermons which the law requires, and became as eager to preach them, as he had been desirous hitherto of avoiding public observation. So long had he been confined

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to preparatory labors, that he became impatient for the active duties of his profession, and seemed to leap for joy at the prospect of doing good in the pulpit. His mind sprung like a bow hastening to discharge its arrow. He had been judicious heretofore, in the mode of spending his vacations, he had devoted them to the recreating of his mind and his body, and had regarded as somewhat comical the remark of Wyttenbach, that vacations were designed for teachers to relax their powers, and for pupils to review their studies. But at the close of his first Senior term at Andover, when his mind had been agitated by the severest affliction of his life, and he had still performed an unusual amount of intellectual labor, he was persuaded to spend the seminary recess in pastoral duties at South Berwick, Maine. The first vacation in which he evidently needed repose, was the first in which he refused to take it. To several of his friends, he gives the following account of his labors: "I preached a third service in Boston last Sabbath evening, and although Monday and Tuesday I felt as well as ever, yet I think I must have over-strained myself, and prepared for the lamentable result. On Wednesday I had a touch of the real bronchitis, which, since that time has assumed the various forms of cold, cough, hoarseness, sore lips, till at length it has deepened into that most unpoetical, vexatious disease, a cold in the head. I conduct a prayer meeting on Sunday evenings, and preach a lecture on Friday evenings. When this interesting cold in my head allows me to do anything, I enjoy myself much in reading and writing. Last week I wrote two sermons, beside reading Carlyle, John Foster, Longfellow's Hyperion, (choice)."—"I ought not in any case to have spent my vacation in the labors which I have been performing, especially when I was as unwell as when I left Boston. I have very narrowly escaped a fever since being here."

But notwithstanding his want of repose, he appeared at the seminary during its summer session, as elastic as ever, and as

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punctual at the required exercises; wrote his essay on the Posthumous Power of the Pulpit, with which he closed the services of his class at their Anniversary, wrote his oration on the Dramatic Element in Pulpit Oratory, which he delivered on leaving the president's chair of the Porter Rhetorical Society, decided one of the most important questions of his life, that of his immediate settlement in the ministry, composed four sermons, and preached so often and with so much zeal, that the end of the term found him again exhausted. But on the Sabbath after the exciting scenes of the Anniversary, he preached three times; on the succeeding Monday returned to his old study at Andover, wrote two sermons in six days, preached on the next Sabbath two sermons at Salem, two in Boston a week afterward, and during the ensuing month preached six times at Buffalo, N. Y., and once at Newark, N. J. He thus allowed himself but little repose from the commencement of his Senior year to the period of his ordination. How little he enjoyed after that period, the sequel will show.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL REGIMEN.

The life of Mr. Homer was as we have seen a happy one. It was exempt from many of the ills to which literary men are exposed. His memoir is not, like that of some others, a record of aches and groans. He went straight forward in one uninterrupted course of improvement until a fortnight before his death. No pecuniary want, no alarming disease, no domestic affliction ever compelled him to leave his studies for a single month. He performed his intellectual labors with as much facility as diligence. *Labor ipse voluptas* was his motto and the secret of his success. Never more happy than with his books, and having never learned from experience the ills or the perils of sickness, he was unwilling to adopt any severe regimen of body. If confidence in the soundness of

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one's constitution were a preventive of disease, his health would never have failed, for he used to say that he did not know enough about sickness to become a hypochondriac. He was abstemious in his diet, but he ate and drank what he chose. He was regular, as in everything else, so also in his exercise, but this exercise was regularly too little. In his most prudent days he was content with a morning and evening walk. The dumb-bells were too monotonous and unintellectual for him, the athletic games were too puerile, the wood-saw and the axe were better fitted to increase his self-denial than his physical vigor; of horsemanship he was utterly ignorant, and indeed there was nothing which could allure him from his books, to those exercises which would have strengthened his muscular system. Even in childhood, he was a more successful competitor for a prize in the school-room, than for victory on the play-ground.

> "Concourse and noise and toil he ever fled,
> Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
> Of squabbling imps."

His friends often remonstrated with him on the perils of his sedentary life. They endeavored to beguile him into a system of more vigorous exercise, as the friends of Richard Hooker would fain do with the judicious youth. "Richard, I sent for you back," said the bishop of Salisbury, "to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and, I thank God, with much ease; and presently delivered into his hands a walking-staff with which he professed he had traveled through many parts of Germany." But a man must lose his health twice before he will learn to take care of it. He needs the "regret of folly to make him wise," and the pains of disease to make him healthy. The subject of this memoir had an instinctive abhorrence of ultraism in religion, politics and literature; and he had seen so much of ultraism in dietetics, that he was repelled into an opposite fault. "As to

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this gastric juice," he said, "I know nothing about it, and care less. Nobody should think of it but the doctor. Animal food I eat, because I have read in the books that man is not a carniverous animal. All kinds of bread are nutritious to me, except what is called dyspeptic bread, and I am never injured by my food, save when I eat for the purpose of promoting my health. I am told that I must not exert my faculties immediately after dinner, but I never knew the day when I could not apply my mind in the afternoon as well as the morning. I am likewise told that the forenoon is better for study than the evening, but so far am I from finding any difference between them, that although I am not a Hibernian, I find the evening the best part of the day." When he read the words of Richard Baxter, "I had in my family the benefit of a godly, understanding, faithful servant, near sixty years old, who eased me of all care, and laid out all my money for housekeeping, so that I never had one hour's trouble about it, nor ever took one day's account of her for fourteen years together," he would say, "that is the way to live;" but it is not the way to live long. He who aims at an entire divorce from earthly cares that he may live a more intellectual life, should remember the paper kite's complaining of the string which held it to the earth and hindered its rise toward heaven.

In some respects, however, the habits of Mr. Homer were favorable to his health. He had the art of relieving a strained faculty by varying its exercise. It may be said of him, as of Robert Hall, "He found the advantages of passing from one subject to another at short intervals, generally of about two hours: thus casting off the mental fatigue that one subject had occasioned, by directing his attention to another, and thereby preserving the intellect in a state of elastic energy, from the beginning to the end of the time devoted daily to study." His innocence and cheerfulness of temper, his control over all his passions, helped to preserve a continued elasticity in his well-nigh spiritual body. His exercise also,

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though insufficient in degree, was favorable in kind. It was taken pleasantly, with a cheering companion, and in forgetfulness of his solitary labors. If three or four of his literary friends had gone with him to his parish, and walked with him there as they had done at Andover, he might have been indebted to them for his life. Professor Tholuck of Halle, who is more familiar with biblical literature than with our manners and customs, recently assigned three reasons for not visiting the United States; first, the rifeness of our mob spirit, which might, as he said, endanger his life; secondly, the prevalence of dyspepsia, which is somewhat peculiar to our students; and thirdly, the want of promenades in our cities and villages. It was a promenade, which Mr. Homer needed at South Berwick, to allure him from his books, and fascinate his eye during the solitary ramble. The probability is, that had he always lived in the groves of the academy, and walked by the gently flowing Ilissus, he had glided smoothly through a long and honorable life. But a man cannot always live in a sequestered bower, nor is that the scene for the perfecting of the soul. It is well that he must wrestle with the perplexities of life. It is an old Chinese proverb, that a gem cannot be polished without friction, nor a man be improved without adversity. When the subject of this notice left his retreat at Andover, and hastened to his parochial toils, he exposed his constitution to a sudden shock. Without a habit of athletic labor, without interest in any employment which he could pursue in the open air, with a system exhausted by the efforts of his Senior year, he was ill fitted for the multiplied responsibilities which he chose to heap upon himself as a pastor. But the melancholy issue of his life is reserved for a future section. It is enough to say,

> "In his own mind our cause of mourning grew,
> The falchion's temper ate the scabbard through."

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RESULTS OF MR. HOMER'S SCHOLARSHIP.

The fruits of mental application are not always tangible. They are seen in the character rather than the exploits of the mind. There is a mellowness of feeling, a refinement of sensibility, a generous and liberal spirit, which, more than any display of erudition, betoken the scholar. The subject of this memoir found the reward of his studies, not so much in the treasures of knowledge which he had amassed, as in the nice adjustment of his moral and mental power, the beautiful symmetry of his tastes and affections and faculties, the balancing, not indeed exact, but more accurate than is common, between one energy and another of his mind and his heart. One of his friends has aptly remarked, that "he displayed the perfectness of growth, a kind of finish, even in his early youth; the shrub possessing the same proportion of parts as the tree which it will become ere long." He had also that candor of mind which comes of an enlarged scholarship. He could never have been a partizan in theology, as a young man often loves to be, and he would probably have done much good by his freedom from that narrow spirit which will cling to a sect or school, be it new or old. But the richest fruit of his scholarship was seen in his increasing capacity for improvement. The rapidity of his mental advances seemed to be accelerating every day, until a half month before his death. He had laid a broad and deep foundation for an intellectual structure which would have risen fair and high.

Before he had closed his twenty-second year, he had accumulated much that would have quickened his mental growth for a long time to come. He had written numerous essays and orations, four quarto volumes of notes on his collegiate studies, eight volumes of abstracts and theses upon the topics of his Seminary course, had acquired six foreign languages,

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some of which he had mastered, had studied with philosophical acumen the writings of Hesiod, Herodotus, Longinus, Dionysius Halicarnasseus, Aeschylus and Euripides, and many of the old English prose authors; had written an analysis of each book in the Iliad and of the Odyssey, with copious annotations upon them, a critical disquisition also upon each of the minor poems and fragments ascribed to the father of poetry, an analysis of the orations of Demosthenes and Aeschines, with extensive criticisms upon each, and various translations from Latin and German commentators upon the sacred and classical writings. He had also collected materials for at least three courses of lectures upon Homer and Demosthenes, and thought himself prepared to finish these courses with but little additional study, and within a short time. A synopsis of these lectures, with a catalogue of the authorities which he considered most important for reference, is published at the close of the present volume.

MR. HOMER AS A FRIEND.

It is not as a scholar that Mr. Homer is most pleasantly remembered, but as a friend. There was an affectionateness and a confiding frankness in his heart and manner, which wound others around him in a strange way. The beauties of his social nature still linger in the remembrance, like the spent breathings of an Aeolian harp, and we would fain muse upon them in silence, rather than describe them to a stranger. His companions never admired so much as they loved him, and they cling to his memory with a tenacity that will never let it go. Their feelings toward him now that he has gone, are his highest praise. They prove that his character was a combination of such virtues as have won the lasting esteem of all who were admitted into the sanctuary of his heart, and that his influence will be the greater and the better as he was the more intimately known. It is said of an

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eminent preacher, that all who never associated with him will be profited by his discourses. The usefulness of the sermons in the present volume will be increased by the familiar knowledge of their author's character. It is somewhat singular, that each of his friends supposed himself to be the peculiar object of Mr. Homer's regard, and each has said, without suspecting the same to have been said by another, "I imagine that he disclosed his feelings to me as freely and confidentially, as to any one living." And even now, he seems, like a good portrait, to be fixing his eye distinctively and winningly upon every individual of his chosen brotherhood.

He did not select his associates logically, by way of inference from any sermon of Bishop Atterbury or Dr. Blair on the choice of companions, nor after a wise calculation of the benefit he might receive from them; not because they were rich, nor because they were popular, nor because they were learned did he choose them, but because he was drawn to them by the mutual attractions of his own and their nature. He *was* their friend before he judiciously resolved to be so. Neither did he confine his attachments to those who were cast in his own mould. He preferred circumstantial varieties amid general sympathies. Nor was he blind to the imperfection of his associates; he saw it, and frankly reproved it, but with all their faults he loved them still. He sometimes indulged them with his confidence merely because they wished it. He freely gave them his hand because they gave him their hearts. He acted on the principle which Dr. Payson commends, "The man that wants me is the man I want." He said of himself, "Alas, I am susceptible, very susceptible, too susceptible;" and if any one appealed to his generosity, or his pity, or his christian benevolence, the appeal was not in vain. Hence he would sometimes contract an intimacy less profitable to himself, than it was flattering to his comrade. He did not draw near to men in their prosperity,

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and find himself otherwise employed in their adversity, nor when his friends were in pain did he study as calmly as if it were well with them. When the multitude frowned upon men whom he valued, he was not "ashamed of their chain." True worth, wherever he discerned it, he would commend, though it were hidden from the view of others, by some unpleasant traits with which it was combined.

It is soothing to recall the interest which was ever manifested by Mr. Homer in those of his fellow students who needed his sympathies. He ministered to his sick classmates as one who suffered with them, and if any of his fellow travelers in the walks of literature were arrested by death, he missed them and spoke of them as his brethren. When young men are herded together in a public institution and secluded from the humanizing influences of the domestic circle, they often become obtuse in their sensibilities, and acquire a roughness and a coarseness which they mistake for the sign of manhood; and when they bear one of their number to the grave, they sometimes affect to be superior to such refinements of expression as are prompted by nature in its truth and healthfulness. In more instances than one, our departed friend perceived some heartless formality at the obsequies of a comrade, and with his peculiar delicacy strove to prevent its recurrence. He remembered as one of the most pleasing, though melancholy services of his life, how he once smoothed the pillow of a dying classmate,[1] studied to ascertain the most exact proprieties of the funeral rites, and then attended the cold remains to the home of the bereaved parents, who resided a hundred miles from Amherst, and were ignorant of the death of their son until a half hour before the corpse arrived. During this journey in an inclement season of the year, and over well nigh impassable roads, his sensibilities were so much excited, that for days after his re-

[1] Mr. D. C. Rowell.

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turn, his tones of voice were mournful, and he seemed to have lost a brother.

While a student at Andover, he writes, Aug. 3, 1838, "Yesterday one of our number, Mr. Homer Taylor, died of typhus fever. He had been sick only a fortnight, and was not supposed to be dangerously ill until a day or two previous to his death. There were some peculiarly interesting circumstances connected with his departure. His delirium, brought on by the violence of his disease, was almost wholly religious. The fact seemed to furnish as cheering evidence, as in such circumstances, could be afforded, of the holiness of his previous life. It seemed as if the power that disordered his mind could not expel, but only confused, those pious contemplations on which he loved to dwell."—"We buried him at evening. 'Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,' that beautiful hymn by Bishop Heber, was sung at the grave, and the solemn toll of the bell mingled most richly with the tones of the music. As we turned away from the grave-yard, the sinking sun repeated the lesson of admonition. It seemed like the voice of providence and the voice of nature speaking together."

Eleven of Mr. Homer's collegiate classmates died before him, and not one of them dropped into his grave without calling forth some lamentation from the subject of this memoir. "One by one," he says, "we shall all drop away, till the last survivor looks back on the catalogue of the dead. *Who will that last survivor be?*" "O what are our prospects of worldly honor or happiness, compared with those that brighten the fading vision, and cheer the sinking spirit."

It is not pretended that in Mr. Homer's intercourse with his friends he was one of those marvellous proper men, who never say anything which is not fit for the press, or write a private letter which is not prepared for the public eye. He did not talk like a book, nor compose his epistles as he composed notes on Aeschines. He agreed with Hazlitt, that "to

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expect an author to talk as he writes is ridiculous, and even if he did so, you would find fault with him as a pedant. We should *read* authors, and not converse with them." Those who enjoyed his correspondence, which was voluminous for one of his years, value his letters highly, but will not allow many of them to be published, they are so full of private allusions, of out-flowings from his own free nature. They are such as none but a friend could write to a friend, and the greater portion of them would lose their interest on the printed page, as the dew-drop parts with its brilliancy when taken up by the chemist for an analysis. What we wish in a friendly correspondence is, that the letter be an emanation of the friend who writes it, that it be himself drawn out, not with any desire of making a show, for this is not friendly, not with any very prominent desire of giving instruction, for this is the correspondence of a lecturer, or of a professor, or of a student, rather than of a man; but with the desire of communing heart with heart, and transfusing one's own familiar thoughts or feelings into the soul of another who is absent in body but present in sympathy. There are some who can engage in an agreeable kind of letter-writing which tends more immediately and avowedly to intellectual edification, but this is the colloquy of judgment with judgment, and has no peculiar relation to the communings of friend with friend. The subject of this memoir was a true and hearty friend, and all his scholarship never left him a dried up specimen of humanity.

But it must not be imagined that his friendship was unprofitable either to himself or to others. The nature of it may be learned from the following description which he has given of one[1] to whom he had been attached from early childhood, and with whom he had shared the most hidden joys of his life. "I think," he says, "that Mr. Brown was made for my friend, and that I was made for his; for his

[1] Mr. James G. Brown, formerly of Boston, Mass.

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faults were those which I have not, and mine are those which he had not. There is a depression in my character where his had a protuberance, and there is a fulness with myself which corresponded with a deficiency in him, so that we met exactly and sympathized in all points."—"I may safely say," he writes again, "that of the whole circle of my acquaintance, although there was not one who would better adorn and enliven by his social qualities a circle of pleasure, there was not one who possessed a deeper spirit of piety, or lived nearer to his Saviour. I am surrounded by mementos of his religious worth, always valued, but since his death most precious. His letters to me breathed the spirit of a man in whose soul religion was the chief treasure. His voice, the tones of which were so familiar in this room, that I hear them this moment, and have heard them again and again since his departure, I remember chiefly for its eloquence in private prayer, and on the great subject which so often made his eye kindle and his heart overflow. I need not assure you how wide is the vacancy which his loss has left in my heart. Differences of education and temperament and circumstances had only deepened our long attachment. There never has been a time since our first acquaintance, when my interest in him has not led me to anticipate how severe would be the shock of his death. Even now, although the first anguish of grief is over, there are, and there must be for a long time to come, hours when its bitterness will recur afresh to the spirit. Yet God's holy will be done."

MR. HOMER IN AFFLICTION.

The last of the preceding paragraph suggests a theme for the present. Though the life of our friend was one of sunshine, still there were a few dark clouds which cast their shadow over his feelings and prospects. It is well that he did not go through this vale of tears, without leaving some

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illustrations of his fitness to endure the ills, as well as enjoy the pleasures of the world. His manly grief, his calm submission to the will of heaven, and the felicitous mode in which he ministered consolation to his afflicted friends, will be seen in the following extracts from his correspondence:

"Andover, Theological Seminary, January 20, and February 27, 1840.—The friend of my early days has been torn from me. You know how deep and long continued has been my attachment to Mr. James G. Brown. My love for him had been growing deeper and deeper every year, until it had sent its roots into the very depths of my soul. For the last few years he had been engaged in commerce at New Orleans, but wishing to gratify the desires, and appease the anxieties of the many who loved him, he had relinquished his business in that city, and was preparing for a permanent residence among his friends at the north. Just before embarking from New Orleans, he wrote as follows: 'I feel a delight in thinking there is One into whose hands I can commit my spirit, and who can command the winds and waves to bear me in safety to my destined port. But if the sea is to prove my grave and burial-place, I pray God that I may be fully prepared for whatever he is to call me to pass through. Infinite wisdom is on the throne, and that which is done is sure to be right.'

There were some peculiar reasons which made me desirous of seeing him at this time. Never before had I anticipated such pleasure in meeting him, and never before had I looked for his return with such anxiety. For the first time in my life, I examined the ship news every day, from his embarkation at New Orleans to his arrival at New York. The recent disasters on the coast had made me apprehensive of peril for him on his homeward voyage, and I read each paper till I saw with joy the record of his safe return. But he had a perilous passage, and it is almost by a miracle that he escaped the disasters of the sea. Where we least looked for danger, where we all felt as secure as by our own firesides, at the threshold of his home, he met the death from which he had been saved in the hour of previous danger.[1] On the afternoon of the thirteenth of January, he left New York for Boston in the steamer Lexington. Amid the flames which consumed that ill-fated boat, or amid the cold waters that swallowed up so many of our fellow citizens on that dark night, he perished. His friends feel assured that he died valiantly and sweetly, and resigned himself

[1] This incident probably suggested the illustration to be found on p. 214.

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with christian composure to the will of his Lord. A few days after the conflagration, his trunk was found upon the beach. It had been exposed to piratical rapacity, but the rude hands of the robbers had left what was more precious than all which they took, his pocket Bible and his Daily Food. It was soothing to find that he had recently marked for his perusal the twenty-third Psalm, which embraces the significant verses, 'The Lord is my shepherd,' and 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.' In his Daily Food he had turned the leaf at the following passages which had been selected for this last day of his life, and which, from his known habits, we believe he had been pondering during his few last hours: 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved,' and 'Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.' I have requested Mrs. Sigourney to commemorate these and other incidents in a poetical effusion. The following are her stanzas, and there is a charming simplicity and a quiet piety about them, which place them far above everything which has yet been written in reference to that sad disaster.

On the death of JAMES GRISWOLD BROWN, *who perished on board the Lexington, January* 13, 1840.

'*Watch*,'—saith the Saviour,—'*watch*,'
Was this thy theme
Of holy meditation,—thou whose heart
Buoyant with youth and health and dreams of bliss,
Pour'd forth at morn, sweet words of parting love?
Was this thy theme?

While each rejoicing thought
Was radiant with bright images of home,
The glowing fireside, the fraternal smile,
The parent's blessed welcome,—long revolved
'Mid distant scenes, and now so near at hand,
Almost within thy grasp,—when all conspir'd
To lull the soul in fond security,—
Say,—didst thou *watch*?

The sullen, wreck-strewn beach
Makes answer that thou didst.
Yea,—the deep sea
So pitiless and stern,—who took the dead
Unheard,—unanswering,—to her cells profound,
Gave back a scroll from thee, more precious far
Than ingots of pure gold.

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So thou didst stand
Firm in thy burnish'd armor,—undismayed,
A faithful sentinel.—The sudden call,
So widely terrible, in words of flame,
Found thee prepared.—Sharp path it was, but short,
To the Chief Shepherd's everlasting fold.—

Let sad affection to her wounded breast
Press this rich balm,—and treasuring up the traits
Of thy blest life,—grave on her signet ring,
'*Watch,—for ye know not when the Son of Man Cometh.*'

And, therefore, unto all who tread
Time's crumbling pathway, saith a voice from heaven
'*Watch and be ready;*' like that faithful one
Who in the strength and beauty of his prime
Sank 'neath the cold wave, to return no more.

"January 21, 1840.—Of the burning of the Lexington I heard first at Andover on Thursday evening. The dreadful suspicion that my friend was not safe, at once flashed upon my mind, but I tried to attribute my fears to my own feverish and anxious spirit. Circumstances came to my memory on cooler reflection which quite removed my anxieties, and I was hardly prepared on Friday evening for the reception of the death's list, with the name of my friend too plainly and unequivocally enrolled in it. For a time it seemed too terrible to be believed. What he was to me, the more than fraternal affection that subsisted between us, you well know. I felt for hours a sensation of loneliness in the room where I had so often welcomed him, and where we had taken sweet counsel together. Buried in the memory of his friendship I scarcely left my study for two days.[1] When I came out, by the grace of God, it was with refreshment that so much of sacred interest mingled with my reminiscences. I caught the well-remembered tones of his voice,—but they were in prayer for you and for me, and for all of us. I traced the lines of his writing,—they breathed a

[1] "I was particularly struck," writes one of Mr. Homer's friends, "at the time of this sudden bereavement with the quiet and calm resignation with which, after a few hours of deep distress, he yielded to the blow. I read him, on the Sabbath evening after the intelligence was received, the beautiful sermon of Tholuck, entitled, 'The Testimony of our Adoption by God the Surest Pledge of Eternal Life.' I could not but look with admiration upon his placid countenance as he seemed to drink in the words of hope and of peace. I have since thought, it seems as if the thought occurred to me then, that he bore the pain almost too nobly; we might have known that he was almost prepared for heaven."

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christian comfort and consolation to us in former afflictions, when he too was here to mourn. Our strong staff was indeed broken, and our beautiful rod; in the flush of manly beauty and promise, the joy of our hearts was torn from us. But he who administers the chastisement brings with it a sure remedy in the reflection that the home which our departed one looked for in his earthly pilgrimage, he has found at the right hand of Jesus. What are these repeated bereavements which rend our souls with anguish but the joyous reunion of our former friends in purer scenes,—and what shall they be to us, but a discipline to ripen us also to follow their footsteps and participate in their reward? I do not think that one could leave the world with a brighter or sweeter memento, with a more beautiful encouragement to his mourning friends than Mr. Brown left behind him. In a letter written a few moments before he went on board the Lexington, he says, 'I leave to-night trusting to the watchful care of my Covenant Shepherd.' Who would wish for a more delightful resting-place than that which this Guardian Friend provides for his chosen? It is a pleasant home which he chooses for his flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, who can doubt that our lost ones shall appear with him in glory."

"February 8, 1840.—You seem to me to dwell too much upon the aggravating circumstances of our late affliction. This is natural, but unnecessary, and probably incorrect. At first, my own soul was haunted by the terrors of that fearful night, and much of the miserable rhetoric that has appeared in public print upon the subject, has been fitted only to inflame the imagination, and in all probability to carry it beyond the reality. After a cooler examination, I have concluded that the physical suffering of the occasion was probably far less than is generally supposed. The intense and thrilling excitement of the scene to many minds would furnish occupation, without giving them an opportunity to brood over their own personal distresses. The human soul is furnished by its Creator with powers of self-support, to be developed in great exigencies, which are almost miraculous. Where was there an exigency so great as that,—and where was the character containing in itself more sources of relief and even happiness, than that of our friend who is gone? I think it not impossible that his constitutional ardor may have made him one of the first who perished. If so, his struggles in the benumbing waters could have been but momentary, and his death may have been as serene as it was quick. We should have perhaps preferred to stand by his bedside and watch his

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lingering agonies; but for him, it was no doubt physically pleasanter to sink down exhausted and senseless into his ocean-bed. It was more like a quiet slumber than we are apt to imagine. There is another thought which has given me great consolation, even in the more fearful alternative that he may have continued among the last. Our dear friend was prepared to die; probably, better prepared than many of us who survive. I think of him in that sweet security which the presence of Jesus can impart, resigning himself to his fate peacefully and calmly. There is a deep meaning in those passages of scripture which were the theme of his last perusal and meditation. There is prophetic beauty in the last words which we heard from him. And now, they are as a voice from heaven assuring us that no outward terrors can disturb the serenity of God's chosen. I think of him as cheering the comfortless in their gloom. With what ardor may not his zeal have been animated. With what efficiency and success may he not have prosecuted on the burning deck, the mission he was not faithless to in the common walks of life. And perhaps, many poor trembling spirits may have been guided by his example and direction to the fold of his Shepherd in heaven. There is a power with which his death speaks to you and to me which I cannot believe we shall be indifferent to. In those last moments, his mental eye no doubt gathered in the sphere of its vision the many who loved him and would mourn his loss. You and I, no doubt, were there, to receive the blessing and the prayer of the dying. Shall not that blessing be upon us through life? Shall not those prayers be answered in our sanctification? Shall not our 'daily food' be the admonition, '*watch*.' When I was called about eight months ago, to mourn over the untimely death of one whom we loved, I wrote to you not to be fearful, for God would take care of me. I meant, dim-sighted as I was, that it could not be that God would afflict us again. I felt that to the survivors life was secure, for God does not often prepare his chastisements in quick succession. But now, when I write to you that God will take care of us, I mean for life or for death. He knows what is best. Would God our bleeding hearts might be spared another shock, yet his will be done. Safe are we all, be we frail or be we vigorous, safe are we all in our Shepherd's care and there only. I leave you with this kind protector, knowing that he never forsakes his chosen."

At subsequent dates he says, "In your affliction, keep up a good heart, let me entreat you. It makes me sad to see that you speak sorrowfully of life. Not that I blame you, but it is so much better to be

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strong. Read over and over again that ennobling Psalm of Life by Professor Longfellow. Look not mournfully on the past. Trust in Jesus and he will support you, and for you and me and all of us will bring light out of our sorrow. And for the dead, rest to their sweet spirits, a rest that is full of life and love.

> 'We know, we know that their land is bright,
> And we know that they love there still.'

Surely they think of and visit us, and it is not idolatrous to pray that they always may. God-sent messengers are they, angels of mercy watching by our bed-side and hovering about our walk. O let us be holy and happy, surrounded as we are by such a cloud of witnesses, —with God and Christ and the holy ones whom we used to know and love all gathering about our pathway, and blessing us with a perpetual presence.———Of those in heaven, something tells me that 'they love there still.' I do not know that I can reason it out, but it is a demand of my soul that it must be, and I know that it is so.——— Yes the departed are still here in the sweet influence of their undying memory, and the consciousness of their ever-present though invisible sympathy and affection. Ever they hover about our pathway. Ever we hear a voice saying to us, Be of good cheer! 'The flowers of our fair garland are torn from us here, only that they may bloom yonder, lovelier and forever.'———In the light which thus seems to shine forth from my dark trial, I can adopt the language of Jeremy Taylor as my own. 'For myself, I bless God I have observed and felt so much mercy in this angry dispensation, that I am almost transported, I am sure, highly pleased, with thinking how infinitely sweet his mercies are when his judgments are so gracious.'———Even in this frown of God's providence, the eye of faith beholds the smile of his love. He has opened to us a clear and delightful pathway to the eternal world. Mild voices are speaking to us, soft hands are beckoning to us to follow the pious dead and receive their reward. I think I can hear them soothing our sorrow with the sweet assurance that the afflictions of life, the terrors of death are not worthy to be compared with their own far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.———Yesterday was the Sabbath, and while we were engaged in the imperfect worship of earth, I often thought of my friend who was then employed in nobler and purer services. The recollection of the many precious Sabbaths we had passed together in this room came home to me. There was one, the last he spent with me here, peculiarly fresh in its impression, and delightfully soothing to my sorrow. That Sabbath, we partook to-

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gether of the sacramental feast. We talked of the destiny of the soul, and the bliss of heaven. We remembered at our social altar the then scattered members of his family, never forgotten by him in his devotions. One of that family, the sister whom we were so soon to mourn, was that day in eternity, though we knew not of it. Much of our conversation and employment, as I afterward thought, was beautifully prophetic of what I dare not call, our loss, but of the new accession to the society of heaven. And now, there seems to have been a deeper, a still more significant prediction, which no doubt was verified when the blessed spirit of the first-called welcomed this brother to her happy home."

On the afternoon of the Sabbath which the preceding letter refers to, the last Sabbath in June, 1839, Mr. Homer read in company with Mr. Brown, the funeral sermon of Jeremy Taylor on the Countess of Carberry. He paused often as he was reading, and spoke of the resemblance between the virtues of the Countess as they are described in the sermon, and the characteristics of the lady whom he alludes to in the last of the passages quoted above, and who as he afterwards learned was borne to her grave at the very hour of his perusing that sermon. By a sudden casualty she had been torn from her family and children at Johnstown, N. Y., " and I," said Mr. Homer, " without suspecting the appropriateness of my employment was celebrating her obsequies, while the procession were slowly moving to her tomb, and I knew it not." A few days after he heard of this bereavement, he wrote the following letter to his friend Mr. Brown :

" July 3, 1839.—How little we thought in the pleasure of our mutual welcome on the noon of Saturday that one so near to us was just receiving a welcome to a sphere of which ear hath not heard nor heart conceived. How little we thought as we were reading over that funeral discourse of Jeremy Taylor, that we were rehearsing the praises of a kindred spirit who had just left our own circle. When we talked on Sabbath morning of the future blessedness of the righteous, she was, no doubt, richly participating in it; and while we were celebra-

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ting in our feeble way the triumphs of Christ's love at his table, she, no doubt was singing the new song, and enjoying a more intimate and blissful communion. O may we meet her there! Which of us can any longer think of loving for this life alone, when we hear her mild sweet voice warning us to love for heaven,—to cherish all our earthly affections in such a way that they can be perpetuated beyond the grave."

On several occasions when the subject of this memoir was bereaved of a friend, he gave expression to his feelings in verse. The following lines he wrote soon after the sudden bereavement to which the last of the foregoing letters has reference:

"I hear thy voice, fond sleeper, now,
Not as it rose in gladsome hour,
When joy illumed thy radiant brow,
And life bloomed fair with many a flower,
But now with solemn tones and still
That wake each chord with finer thrill.

I hear thy voice in many a scene
Where thou in buoyant hope didst roam,
Not such as when thyself hast been
The cherished idol of thy home:
But now in accents richly deep
From the low grave where thou dost sleep.

I hear thy voice in melting song,
Not as its cadence charmed the ear
Amid the gay and happy throng
Who gathered round thy beauty here.
A spirit's joy, a spirit's lyre
Thy strains of melody inspire.

I hear thy voice in fondness call,
Not as it gave its witching tone
To sway with soft and gentle thrall,
And soothe the sorrows of thine own.
But quivering now with purer love
For us below, for those above.

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I hear thy voice! It cometh oft
In sorrow's gush and memory's swell,
When sigh we for its welcome soft
Or whisper of its sad farewell.
It comes with happy tone and blest
And bids us to thine own sweet rest."

MR. HOMER'S RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

The depths of the sorrow which has been indicated in the foregoing letters were disclosed to but few of Mr. Homer's friends. His most sacred feelings he was not apt to reveal. Hence his religious character was understood only by those who were intimate with him. He kept no daily record of his emotions; he was afraid that while writing his diary, he should often "turn an eye to the window," and the private journal would, after all, be prepared for public inspection. What will men think of this, if it should ever be exposed? is a question that slyly creeps into the mind of even a secret diarist. He feared the influence of a religious record upon his own heart. If a man be moved by strong impulses of piety, while he is making the record, he will use glowing language, and this, meeting his eye a month afterward, will give him a higher notion of his goodness than he can entertain truly or safely. If he be moved by no such impulses, he will express deep lamentation over his spiritual sloth, and when he reviews the mourning record, he will form too exalted an opinion of the humility that prompted it. If he have defrauded his neighbor in a bargain, he will not be so willing to write a plain narrative of the fraud, as to pour forth his sorrow for a want of trust in divine providence; and the grief expressed for this comparatively respectable failing will remind him, years afterward, of his delicate moral sensibility, rather than of his flagrant crime. "Last week," said Mr. Homer," I derived great pleasure from reading the religious diary of ——. It is rich, *rich*, in religious experience. He

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seems to have elaborated his love to Christ until it appears to be almost seraphic. But alas! I shall never read that diary again, for I perceive that a year or two before his death he re-wrote it. What must a man's expectation be, in penning his religious journal the second time?"

It is to be regretted, however, that these injurious tendencies of keeping a private record assumed so great a prominence in Mr. Homer's mind. The positive good resulting from this practice would, in his own case, have overbalanced the evil. But his most sacred feelings he shrunk from disclosing, even to himself. He was not communicative on all other themes, and silent on his own christian experience, but his reserve on this theme was precisely what we should expect from his native delicacy. Indeed his whole religious character was in keeping with himself. He was not a doctrine in theology, neither was he sanctification, but he was Mr. Homer sanctified in part. He looked and spoke naturally when religion was the theme of discourse, and all his modes of manifesting religious feeling were such as accorded with his temperament and tastes. The phrase, naturalness of piety, is an ambiguous one, but if it were not it would well designate his character. The perfection of goodness is to make a right use of the nature which God has given us. As it is one of the highest attainments to be natural in anything, so it is the last attainment of a good man, to regain entirely the nature that was lost in the fall. To shun artificial developments and mere conventional forms, and to let one's free and full heart flow out in the channel of true benevolence is a great thing; far greater than to catch a certain good tone, and to be familiar with a round of phrases that may happen to form the Shibboleth of a community.

Like himself his piety was retiring. Others were more regular than he at the *public* meeting for prayer; but there has seldom been found a Christian more punctilious in observing his hours of *secret* devotion. "After I had retired

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at night, I always heard his voice in earnest prayer," is the testimony of one who lived in the room contiguous to his at Amherst. The same witness is borne by one at Andover. That he allowed his secret prayers to be audible is indeed somewhat of an anomaly in his religious life, for he was fond of shunning the least appearance of parade, and if any one thing more than another were his abhorrence, it was Pharisaism. If the sound of his piety did not go forth from the crowded hall so loudly as that of others, he was faithful to the hour of religious concert with a few absent friends. Like himself too, his piety was kind, condescending and considerate. He was not a noisy member of a Peace Society, nor clamorous for Moral Reform, but he cultivated the amiable instincts of his nature, and delighted in diffusing happiness among those around him. His motto was, "Caritate et benevolentia sublata, omnis est è vita sublata jucunditas." He did not strive nor cry, nor was his voice heard in the street. He did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. He was ever marked for his kindness to those who were feeble in the christian faith. "He plied them with the arts of a sacred courtship," and allured them to higher attainments in the spiritual life, and while he reproved them they loved him. He delighted in taking up what others had thrown away, and doing what he could for the rescue of one that was given over to uncovenanted mercies. Often was he asked by one of his friends, What *protégé* have you now in your train? It was pleasing to see the readiness with which his spirit, by an instinct, sought out the persecuted, the down-trodden,—how quick he was to defend from all injustice the weaker of two opponents, and if the question between the two were exactly balanced, he was only to learn which was the stronger ere his sympathies clustered around the feebler. From the earliest days of his religious life until the last, he felt a peculiar sympathy for those who had not the cheering influences of the right faith. He exerted an in-

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fluence over them which none of his brethren could attain. He would labor to insinuate the truth into their minds and charm away their prejudices. He would concede to them whatever he might with an approving conscience, admit the force of their objections, if there were force in them, and confess that he had felt the same, and tell how he was rescued from their power. Then he would intrench himself upon the strong grounds of his faith, defend its essential features with a determined zeal, preserve his kindness and equanimity amid somewhat acrimonious assaults, and in some pleasing instances he has convinced the gainsayer and relieved the doubter. Not that he always would directly introduce the subject of difference, but like Herbert's country parson, with his great object "he mingled other discourses for conversation's sake, and to make his higher purposes slip the more easily." He never meant to be rash in his assaults upon the faith of his opponents, but he premeditated both the subjects and the style of his discourse with them, and laid his plans for skilfully alluring them to a religious life. He once walked his room until eleven o'clock at night, for the purpose of devising the best scheme for reaching the conscience of one whom he pitied, but he could devise no safe expedient, and therefore did nothing.

In some respects it would have been wiser for himself to associate more than he did with those who were confirmed and mature in the christian life; but while there were minds which could be led by him through a maze of scepticism, and which needed the peculiar attractions of his fellowship, he chose to forego his individual benefit. In a letter to one who had but recently entered upon a religious course, he says, "I am rejoiced that you do not think of losing your interest in any of your old companions, although they may not sympathize fully with the change in your views and feelings. You may do them much good. I know that the intellectual arrogance of a vain philosophy furnishes a most unprofitable

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field for labor, but even that cannot be proof against the power of a holy life, certainly not against the working of the Spirit for which we may always pray. Nor are we left to our religion as if it could find no response in the intellect as well as the heart. Let us sometimes meet the wisdom of this world upon its own ground. Surely the philosophy of a mind like Paul's is not to be contemned, any more than his sacred logic can be grappled with and overthrown. With such a one we might be proud to sit down and weep over sin, to hang our hopes on the foolishness of the cross, to content ourselves with the simple revelation of mysteries at which we could but cry out, 'O the depth!' Chiefly may we be proud to sit down like children at the feet of him who spake as never man spake. Human philosophy never provided such an instructer, such a Saviour. It is a gift to the world which meets the want of every mind. And he alone is blessed who hears in the words, 'Come unto me,' an invitation to his own world-worn and unsatisfied nature, and is determined to make the noble sentiment of Chrysostom his own, 'When we rise, the cross—when we lie down, the cross—in all places and at all times, the cross, shining more glorious than the sun.'"

There was a kind of generosity and healthiness in Mr. Homer's religious character. His views of truth were rational, and he learned religious lessons from all that he read or heard. "Some of my brethren," he writes, "have been a little scandalized at the want of spirituality in the exercises which I have been describing to you. But on my mind they have a decidedly religious influence. They send me to my knees, that I may ask God for his blessing upon the good counsels which are given us, and my own feeble endeavors to live up to them. They give me higher views of my great work, of my solemn calling; and if this be less religious than such a discourse as leaves us weary and dissatisfied, then religion is something different from an active consecration of the soul to God." His healthful interest in all that is good and graceful,

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his sympathy with natural virtue even where but little of it was to be found, and his kindliness of feeling toward all who belonged to his race, and especially toward those whose character was unfortunately misunderstood, made him appear more liberal and catholic than some would think either judicious or safe. His error would always be on the side of leniency rather than of bigotry. It was not his highest aim to become popular in the church, but to set an example of enlarged, comprehensive piety, and to secure the favor of God rather than the praise of even good men. "I tremble," he said, "for the Christian who has a high repute in the world for his spiritual attainments. I pray God that he may be as humble as he is famous. It is cruel for our religious reviews to speak of living authors as eminent for piety. These authors will read the commendation, and if they believe the half of what is written, they will think more highly of themselves than they ought to think."

Besides his quickness of sympathy with all who were in need of moral support, his readiness to be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and his affable companionship even with such as preferred to keep aloof from religious society, the more obvious peculiarities of his religious action were his wisdom in adopting fit means for fit ends, and his freedom from all hackneyed and cant phraseology. He was not so fond of exhorting men "to embrace the Saviour," as to rely for salvation on the atonement; nor did he inquire so often "what were their frames of mind," or "how they had enjoyed a particular season," as he was of learning their spiritual state in easy and incidental converse. The following is one among many specimens of his style in exhorting a sinner to repentance. The reader will perceive how sedulous he was to avoid the phrases which so often annoy the person whom they are designed to benefit, hardening the heart because they disgust the taste.

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"Andover, March 8, 1840.—It gives me great pleasure to hear from your letter, that some of your own friends are beginning to walk in the good way. I learn from various sources that the Spirit of God is now very near to the families and churches of Boston, and I have not ceased to pray that you may not let this golden opportunity pass unimproved. Something has whispered to me that the harvest season of your soul is at hand. If you suffer it to leave you before your peace is made with God, who can predict that there will ever be another period when the Spirit and the bride will urge their invitation so persuasively as they do now? And if you resist these influences, what can be expected for the lesser influences which may appeal to you in future, when your heart may be more hardened than it is at present. It made me glad that you could write me of being 'at times anxious for the salvation of your soul.' But I rejoice with trembling, for I know that Christ requires something more than occasional anxiety. He demands that you give yourself no rest till you have yielded to his claim. He asks something more than anxiety,—he asks a full surrender of your powers and affections to his service. He contemplates with no satisfaction the heart that has been awakened by his voice only to disobey it. Could there be a more reasonable demand than his,—that you *this instant* fix your heart on the love that bled and died for you, and love it; that without a *moment's* delay you resolve to keep his commands, and keep them, no longer impelled by desires for your own gratification, but sweetly inclined to do his will, through life and forever. Let me entreat you not to rest secure that you are on the way to repentance, for repentance is a duty that must be performed now, without delay. Let me urge you not to deceive yourself by imagining some more convenient season, though not far off, when you can begin to live for God. *Now* is the only sure moment held out in the word of God, when the soul's salvation may be secured. Will you not then repair immediately to that Saviour who is waiting to receive each lost and sinful child for whom he poured out his precious blood. Choose him for your guide and portion. Give him the heart you are now wasting on the world. For every earthly sacrifice he will restore you an hundred fold, in the green pastures through which he leads his chosen on earth, and by the river of God in heaven."

It is as forming a new variety among the plants that our heavenly Father hath planted, that the religious life of Mr. Homer elicits the interest of his friends. Each differing

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beauty in the garden of the Lord conduces to that impression of completeness which ought to be made by the whole scene. The elements of a religious character are combined in various proportions in different individuals. Each of these combinations has its excellences; no one of them is a standard for exclusive imitation. They depend on varieties of temperament and of early training, and are all deficient when compared with the perfect model that shines forth in the gospel. An error of many Christians is, that they attach an authority to the example of some imperfect man, and debar from their fellowship all who do not follow that example. One class of religious developments they commend too exclusively, and are intolerant of another class which are useful in their own sphere, but are not in sympathy with the provincial taste. Our duty is to reverence the graces of the Spirit whatsoever they be, and to aim after that union of all the virtues which we discover in our great Exemplar.

The subject of this memoir had not the deep self-abhorrence of him who cried out in view of his sins, "Infinite upon infinite—infinite upon infinite;" nor had he the sombre and gloomy piety which made him walk over the ground like David Brainerd, fearing that the earth was just ready to open itself and swallow him up; nor had he the bruised and morbid spirit of Cowper, nor the imposing and awe-inspiring virtues of Payson, nor the spirited and impetuous piety of Baxter, pressed on by an irritated nerve, and looking for no peace till he reached the Saint's Everlasting Rest. There was the calm and philosophical devotion of Bishop Butler,—there was the mild and equable and philanthropic temper of Blair and of Tillotson; but it was neither of these that Mr. Homer held up as his exclusive model. He had not attained a perfect symmetry of christian virtue, but he was aiming after it, and striving to blend the graces of the gospel into one luminous yet mild, rich yet simple expression.

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MR. HOMER'S FACETIOUSNESS.

It is said by some uninspired men, that our Saviour while on earth never laughed. This assertion, which is probably false, would prove nothing if it were true. He who left the abodes of eternal blessedness and was God manifest in the flesh, he who bore a world's redemption upon his heart, who came that he might suffer, and suffered that we might be healed, who died to bear our sins, and in his death was forsaken even by his Father, such a being might well do many things which we may not do, and abstain from much that we may practise. We, who are enjoying the fruit of his labors, and are living on the merits of his death, need not be always sombre and exceeding sorrowful.

It is also said that stern realities are before us, sickness, bereavement, death; and in view of the evils to which we are hastening, we should repress our sportive tendencies and prepare for the dark hour. It is indeed good to think of our dying scenes, to think of them often, so often that we may rise above the fear of death, and become conquerors through him that loved us. But are these to be our only thoughts? Is there to be no variety of christian feeling? Shall we always speak on the minor key? Are there not green spots on the earth, as well as arid wastes? Are there not bright seasons in life, and joyous meetings and thrilling prospects, and is not religion too often confounded with gloom and sadness?

The subject of this memoir was a serious and thoughtful man, but was religiously careful to prevent his seriousness from being degraded into dulness. He was earnest and solemn; but "as the two greatest men and gravest divines of their time, Gregory Nazianzen and Basil, could entertain one another with facetious epistles," so in the present instance all needful care was taken to prevent solemnity from degenerating into sanctimony. He looked upon sanctimony as a sole-

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cism in the expression of good feeling, as a blunder of soberness. It is not a rational interest in grave and momentous concerns, but a stiff and monotonous gravity where there is no need of it. It consists in grieving at a time when joy would be more appropriate, in wearing a sad countenance where God and nature call for smiles, and speaking in semitones where all demureness and whining are like snow in midsummer. It is sometimes a morbid dissatisfaction with the world, and is mistaken for a rational longing after heaven. It is sometimes a sullen or a misanthropic temper, and is honored with the title of hatred to the sins of men. It is a want of religious health, and may now and then be cured by an innocent joyousness of temper as by a medicine. It is a mortifying fact, we are men and not spirits. The truth cannot be concealed, we are made of the dust of the earth, and in the strange commingling of mind with matter, there is a law of contraries which is as fixed as any other law. If we would be intellectual we must eat; if we would be wakeful, we must sleep; if we would toil hard and long, we must rest betimes; and if we would be truly sober, sober as a *man* is and not as an automaton, we must not dry up the vein of humor, which is one of the veins that help to fill out the human system.

The proper regulation of a humorous fancy was often the subject of Mr. Homer's thoughts. Among the gifts with which he had been richly endued by him who creates nothing in vain, was a quick sense of the ludicrous; and this he deemed it wiser to control than to extirpate. He regarded it as a part of his constitution and as a fit antagonist to another part, a tendency to a morbid gloom. He resisted this tendency like a wise and brave man, so that some of his intimate companions were never aware of his possessing it. As he admired that great law of the universe according to which a single energy is modified by its opposite, so in his own constitution he set one thing over against another, and by his buoyant sallies of wit he diverted his mind, in a good degree, from prey-

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ing upon itself. He thus preserved for so long a time and amid wasting toils his uninterrupted health. It was not so easy for him to declare war against a comic humor, as it is for those who are never assailed by such an enemy. He had no very profound reverence for the self-denial of those men who havé resolved to banish every witticism from their thoughts, if perchance one should ever be suggested to them. It is not difficult for a man to be grave who can never be otherwise. On the other hand, they who are fond of sparkling humor are on that account disposed to commend it. Men love to praise themselves by extolling such faculties as they possess, and undervaluing such as are denied to them. One thing is certain, we should never indulge the exhilarating passions while we think them wrong or injurious. Another thing is equally certain, we should not imagine them to be wrong or injurious, unless they be so. For although innocent pleasures invigorate the moral sense while they are viewed as innocent, they produce an opposite effect when their character is misunderstood. They become guilty by being thought so.

The person who never smiles will do a thousand worse things from which a smile would have saved him. An occasional liberty of this sort is one of the safety valves of the moral constitution. "Men only become friends," says Dr. Johnson, "by community of pleasures. He who cannot be softened into gayety, cannot easily be melted into kindness. Upon this principle one of Shakspeare's personages despairs of gaining the love of Prince John of Lancaster, for 'he could not make him laugh.'" Differing temperaments, it is true, must be governed by different laws, but for every man it is the one great law, that he should exercise all the sensibilities which God has given him, and in the proportion which their relative value prescribes; that he should pass his best hours in labor for the good of others, and in his remaining hours should refresh himself for his returning toils.

There was something intangible and evanescent in the

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sportiveness of Mr. Homer. It was so refined as to elude the perception of some. He produced an effect when no one could tell how or why. He was resorted to, as a kind of physician, by the intimate friend who had wearied himself in intense thought and had begun to suffer the corroding of over-strained faculties. No one but Dr. Barrow can describe his facetiousness, and the "unfair preacher" would say, that "it consisted sometimes in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying; sometimes it lurked under an odd similitude, or was lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd imitation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection. Sometimes it was couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, in acute nonsense, or in sarcastical twitches that are needful to pierce the thick skins of men. Sometimes it arose only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange, sometimes from a crafty wresting of obvious matter to the purpose; often it consisted in one knows not what, and sprang up one can hardly tell how. It was, in short, a manner of speaking out of the simple and plain way, which by a pretty surprising strangeness in conceit or expression did affect and amuse the fancy, stirring in it some wonder and breeding some delight thereto, gratifying curiosity with its rareness, diverting the mind from its road of tiresome thoughts, and seasoning matters otherwise distasteful or insipid with an unusual and thence grateful tang."

The facetiousness of Mr. Homer was less noticeable in earlier than in later life. As his application to study became the more intense, he was the more inclined to refresh his exhausted spirit in the exhilarations of humor. He multiplied his reliefs when he increased his tasks. As the reservoir deepened and widened the jet played quicker and higher. When he commenced his parochial labor, he deemed it advisable to check somewhat the out-flowings of his amusing fancy, but

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he soon found that he needed the relaxation which he had abandoned; and that, whatever others might do, he could not preserve his elasticity in toil without the aid of that nimble faculty, which was designed to refresh a wearied spirit by its grotesque and diverting images. He was as conscientious in his indulgence as he was in his labor, for he knew like Herbert's country parson, that "nature will not bear everlasting droopings, and that pleasantness of disposition is a great key to do good, not only because all men shun the company of perpetual severity, but also for that when they are in company, instructions seasoned with pleasantness both enter sooner and root deeper. Wherefore he condescended to human frailties, both in himself and others, and intermingled some mirth in his discourses occasionally, according to the pulse of the hearer."

It is not pretended that Mr. Homer always indulged his facetiousness with a religious motive, and controlled it with a firmness of principle that never knew remission. He was not one of those perfect men who live in biographies but nowhere else, and who never utter a word which dying they would wish to recall. All that we care to say in his praise is, that the charms of his conversation were greater, and the foibles of it less, than those of most men, even good men. His excellences were positive rather than negative, and he must have been more than human if they were never combined with a fault. His was a mind of vivacity and ardor, and it was a well regulated mind; but these properties are less favorable than hebetude and coldness to the reputation of a perfectly faultless man. It was common indeed to speak of him as faultless, he was so free from the usual foibles of sedentary persons, from all the malignant feelings, from bigotry and its kindred vices. But he well knew that one who offendeth not in word is a perfect man, and he was quick to confess that he had never attained this perfection. Designing to do good by innocent accommodations to others, he some-

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times failed in his plan, and found it easier to go down to them than bring them up to himself. His virtue lay in attempting to do good when others would shrink back from the effort; and if in pursuing his purpose he found a temptation which "proved too strong for young Melancthon," even then his failing leaned to virtue's side; but he mourned over it as one who aimed to be pure from the blood of all men.

Of a summer evening, toward the close of a session in the Theological Seminary, as he was winding his way with a friend over one of their accustomed walks, he said, as nearly as can now be remembered, "I never accomplished so much as I have done during the past term, but my influence has not been precisely what I wish to have it. In my excessive labors I resorted to mental relaxation as a duty, but I occasionally lost my regard to it as such, and sought it as a mere pleasure. I have found it hard to draw the line between the end of reason and the beginning of superstition, and easy to glide from facetiousness into what I have heretofore aimed to avoid, levity. But I must check myself on both sides, and in shunning lightness of speech must not fall into gloominess. When a man has committed one error he is strongly tempted to rush into another of a different sort. We must bear in mind that God never bestows a favor upon us which is not subject to perversion, and an enlightened faith will not allow us to trample on a gift of Providence because it may be abused. If we have a sprightliness of fancy, we must not become torpid through fear of being gay. I meant to enlarge my usefulness by the very thing which has diminished it, but I must not diminish it still more by despising an indulgence which I have used, at times, less wisely than I meant to do."

He might have added, that after all, a failure in any attempt suggests some reason for gratitude. If the attempt were a bad one, we should be thankful that we have failed in it; if it were a good one, we should be thankful that we have made it, and without the trial we could not have failed. He

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who says nothing lest he should err, is further from perfection than he who tries to say a useful thing, even though his success be not equal to his effort. There is a kind of taciturnity which is "wise in fools, but foolish in wise men." It does no prominent mischief, and not even a latent good. So there is a kind of free converse which is a sweetener of human life, and which disarms men strangely of an evil spirit, but which, though begun with a right aim, ends occasionally in some wrong impression. It springs, however, from a positive virtue, and this, even a little of it, is better than blank stupidity. Heaven is the only place where we shall attain all that is good without any of its alloy; and where holiness will cease to be regarded as a negative thing, a mere freedom from foibles without the energy of practical benevolence.

In analyzing a character and dissecting each several attribute by itself, there is always danger of giving an undue prominence to some quality that is isolated from its connections. It should therefore be repeated, that the property which we have now been canvassing was not to all observers a striking, and to some not even a noticeable trait in Mr. Homer's mind. It was not exhibited at all times and in all companies. His character was comprehensive and symmetrical. Viewed from different points of observation it disclosed varying excellences, and no two of his friends would exactly agree in their delineation of all its features. It may be said of him as of another, "You have not done with him when you have mentioned two or three good traits."

It may also be remarked that if his example is to be followed, it should be followed in his labors as well as his reliefs. "May I read Shakspeare as much as he did?" Yes, if you will read it with as philosophical a spirit, and pray as earnestly for the guiding influences of Heaven. "May I take as much interest in the Essays of Elia as he took?" Yes, if you will commune as he did with the master minds of the ancient world, if you will read the Greek and Hebrew

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Scriptures with all of his sympathy and delight, and if like him you will aim to resist every impulse that lessens your fervor of devotion. He thought so often of the scenes that lie hidden behind the veil, his conscience was so enlightened, and his sense of decorum so exact, that he might often be trusted where others who have not his safeguards would become absorbed in a pastime, and convert a means into an end. He was enamored of innocence, and none the less so when he found it in pleasures; but too many are enamored of pleasure none the less when it is devoid of innocence. At first view it seems easy to imitate a christian scholar in his diversions; but we must remember that all true divertisement presupposes habitual toil, and that the pleasures of a Christian imply a sensitiveness of the moral faculty. He who would imitate another's repose must qualify himself for it by fatigue, and the fatigue of a good man is obtained by useful exertion.

MR. HOMER AT SOUTH BERWICK.

In May, 1840, while Mr. Homer was a member of the Theological Seminary, he spent nearly four weeks at South Berwick, Maine; and by his preaching and pastoral labor so endeared himself to the Congregational church and society in that place, that they invited him to become their minister. So peculiar was the interest which they manifested in him, that after mature deliberation he accepted their call. He had been earnestly entreated to take the charge of a more conspicuous parish in one of our Atlantic cities; but he chose to dwell in a modest valley, amid scenes that favored his contemplative habits, rather than to live amid noise and bustle and parade.

The town of South Berwick is in the south-western part of the State of Maine, and is separated from the State of New Hampshire by a very narrow stream. The village is near

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the head of the navigation of the Piscataqua, and is about fourteen miles from Portsmouth, N. H. It contains four places for public worship; the Methodist, Baptist, Free-will Baptist and Congregational, and half a mile from it is a small Episcopal church. It also contains a large and respectably endowed Academy, which was founded as early as 1792, and has exerted an important influence upon the character of the surrounding population. From some of the eminences in South Berwick there is a beautiful view of the village of Great Falls, four miles toward the north-west, and of several cascades upon the stream that winds through the valley. Agamenticus rises about ten miles distant, and adds a singular charm to the southern prospect from the village. There are three large manufacturing establishments in the place, and the town presents many advantages for commercial enterprise. It contains two thousand three hundred inhabitants. The church over which Mr. Homer was ordained consists of one hundred and twenty-five members, and the congregation to which he preached varied from two hundred and fifty to three hundred. Twenty-five young men from this small town have been graduated at our collegiate institutions, and Mr. Homer ordinarily preached to twelve or fifteen persons who have received a liberal education.

On the sixth of October, 1840, he was married, at Buffalo, N. Y. to Miss Sarah M. Brown, daughter of Mr. James F. Brown of Boston, and sister of Mr. Homer's early and lamented friend. On the eleventh of November he was ordained at South Berwick. A member[1] of the Council that ordained him has written the following description of his appearance at this time. "He discovered at his examination a mind that was habituated to original thought. His religious views were decidedly evangelical, and had been embraced after a patient study. He had not adopted a creed because it was recommended by great names, and he avoided stereo-

[1] Rev. Silas Aiken, pastor of Park-street church, Boston, Mass.

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typed phraseology in the statement of his faith. He had studied the Bible for himself, and was cautious of stating his views more strongly than his convictions would justify. He had evidently attended to the controverted points in metaphysics and philosophy which have relation to religious faith; and when questions were put to him involving disputes of this nature, he was wary in his answers, for he anticipated other questions that might be in reserve. He saw whither the inquiry would lead. The testimony of the Scriptures was to him a sufficient ground of faith; but in matters of doubtful disputation, he would declare a belief only so far as he had found reasons for one. He had marked the proper limits of faith. On subjects intrinsically difficult or doubtful, he expressed himself with reserve. Where many young men, less acquainted with the history of religious opinions, would have blushed to confess ignorance, he freely declared his doubts, and seemed aware that others were equally in the dark with himself. In a word, it was obvious that the principles and habits of mind, so early formed, gave promise of rare ability in stating, explaining and defending divine truth."

The following is the Creed which Mr. Homer read before the Council, and from which he had, of set purpose, excluded many of the technical phrases of theology.

"I believe in the existence of God. I find that such a being is demanded by my moral nature, and the evidence of my own spirit is confirmed by what I behold of the marks of design around me and within me.

God has given in his word an infallible revelation of his own character, and of his relation to his creatures. From the Holy Scriptures, and from that light which every human being possesses in his own soul, should be compiled his system of religious belief.

I accordingly believe that God is one, that he is absolutely eternal, without beginning and without end, and as he exists without succession, in him there can be neither change nor shadow of turning. That he has knowledge and power infinitely higher in kind and degree than the knowledge and power of his creatures, and that there is no

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place in his universe where these attributes do not extend and act. I believe that to him may be ascribed goodness, mercy and grace, wisdom, justice and veracity. These truths are most of them rendered highly probable by reason, and all of them are removed beyond a doubt by the express declaration of the Bible.

A contemplation of the character of God proves how incomprehensible are his perfections, and renders it highly improbable that the mode of his existence would be similar to that of his creatures. Accordingly I am fully prepared to believe what the Scriptures assert of the divinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and in my faith, though not in my reason, to reconcile the Trinity with the Unity of God.

I believe that God has known and determined, from all eternity, everything which exists. As a distinction is made in his administration between the righteous and the wicked, I believe that it was always intended. For wise reasons, known only to himself, God selected certain of his creatures to be the subjects of grace, and the heirs of glory; while he determined to leave others to perish in their sins. At the same time, as the divine decree is not the rule of human conduct, I shall preach that man is as free and independent in his moral and religious actions, as he is in the pursuit of his secular business, and that every man can obey the demands of the gospel, and will be punished for neglecting to avail himself of his ability.

I believe that our first parents were for a time perfectly holy, but when they disobeyed the command of God, they fell at once from their pure estate, and all their posterity were involved in the consequences of their fall. Every human being now comes into the world with a bias to sin rather than to holiness, and all his moral acts are wrong until he becomes regenerated by the Spirit of God. The depravity of man implies a want of will, rather than a natural inability to obey the divine command. Nothing but the special influences of the Holy Spirit, operating through the truth, will change this perverse inclination, and make the sinner willing in the day of God's power. And he, who is once radically changed in his moral character, will be kept by divine grace from falling into final impenitence and ruin.

In the renewed man there is still much of remaining imperfection, and no subsequent obedience can atone for previous sins. God has in mercy provided a way of pardon for all men, through the death of Jesus Christ, the Mediator. By faith in this atoning Saviour we may be justified, not through the merit there is in faith, but through the grace that accepts a vicarious atonement for our sins.

I believe that after death there is a retribution, the reprobate being

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cast into a state of suffering, and the elect being introduced to scenes of joy. Not however until after the resurrection and judgment, will the misery of the one or happiness of the other be consummated. The soul is immortal, and every circumstance in its nature, and every indication of Scripture favor the idea that its retribution, for joy or for wo, will be as lasting as its existence."

Soon after his ordination, Mr. Homer invited his parishioners to meet him of an evening, and to hear his plans for future labor. He stated to them that on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons of each week, he should make pastoral visits; that on Monday, Tuesday and Saturday afternoons he would be happy to see them at his lodgings; that he should be in his study every forenoon, and then could not allow himself to be interrupted, unless in case of urgent necessity; that he could not mingle in their social parties, for his evenings were too precious to be lost from his study.[1] He urged his hearers to regularity in their attendance upon the services of the sanctuary; he assured them that he should labor on his sermons, and should preach on the Sabbath what he had written during the week, whether his auditors were many or few; that he should have no rainy-day discourses for rainy-day audiences, and sun-shining sermons for a fair weather congregation, but should give to the few who disregarded the storm, what he had prepared for the many who were more afraid of an unpleasant atmosphere than of spiritual poverty. His remarks on this occasion produced a salutary effect. The number of those who attended church on the unpleasant Sabbaths of his ministry was greater by half than had formerly ventured forth in a storm; and though the frowning of the elements would still deter some of his people from visiting the sanctuary, it had less influence on his own congregation than on any other in the village.

[1] In a letter to a friend he says, "A minister must preserve the habits of a student; in other words, the student *will out*, or rather will *not* out, winter evenings."

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The industry and system to which he had habituated himself in the preparatory schools were now his second nature. He had never quieted himself in a loose and irregular discipline, with the hope that when he entered upon active life, all the requisite good habits would come to him of their own accord. He prescribed certain hours for familiar converse with his friends, certain hours for his classical studies, three times a day for his private devotions, and, with his characteristic system, he wrote the names of different individuals in his society, for whom he was to offer especial prayer on successive days.

His plans for beneficent action are said by his parishioners to have been formed and executed with peculiar sagacity and tact. He first endeavored to revive the Sabbath School, and by skilful efforts he gave an impulse to it which it is hoped will be productive of lasting good. He introduced an additional number of both teachers and pupils into the school, and made it attractive to the old as well as the young. He was peculiarly attentive to the younger classes, and strongly attached them to himself. When visiting a family, he was fond, like Robert Hall, of "stealing in earlier than he was expected, that he might for a time share in the gambols and gayety of the children." He instituted a new plan for conducting the exercises of a weekly religious meeting, and for promoting among his people a systematic acquaintance with divine truth. On the Friday evening of one week, he would propose a subject, divide it into several branches, and appoint three or four members of his church to investigate each of these different parts, and state the results of their investigation on the next Friday evening. After their remarks, he gave his own views of the subject, and they were always such as indicated a studious preparation. Having adopted several other expedients for quickening the religious feeling of his people, he devised a plan for awakening among them a deeper interest in the cause of Foreign

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Missions, and inducing them to contribute more generously to our various benevolent societies. He also intended to deliver an address in the spring of the year, on the connexion between taste and religion, and hoped to persuade his fellow-citizens to adorn their village with ornamental trees and with promenades.

The results of his brief ministry cannot be estimated with precision. It is always difficult to ascertain the amount of evil which a preacher prevents, as well as the amount of good which he accomplishes; to ascertain also those general impressions of his ministry, which are often more important than particular though striking instances of individual benefit. He united parties among his people that had previously been discordant. He allured to the sanctuary men who had formerly forsaken it. He gave to all an exalted idea of the pulpit, of a sermon, of the sacred office. He taught them to honor the ministry for its relations to the literature and the politics and the liberties, as well as to the virtues of the country. He produced such an impression upon his hearers as they had never felt before, that holiness of heart is essential to all that is most lovely and alluring, and that opposition to evangelical truth is neither rational, nor safe, nor manly. From his ministry of four months, his professional brethren may learn both the real and factitious value of a sound scholarship, in augmenting the influence of a preacher, in fitting the style of his discourses for a favorable operation upon his hearers, and predisposing them to rely on his statements as the statements of a practised thinker. They may also learn the eloquence which there is in an earnest desire to do good. It was the simple-hearted wish of Mr. Homer to promote the religious welfare of his people. They saw it, they felt it, they gave him their confidence as the reward of it. They loved him because he loved them. The religious zeal of a benevolent and refined and honest man, especially when it is conjoined with the character as well as the reputation of a schol-

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ar, will always exert an influence, and often command homage. It will receive honor from the piety, the conscience of some, the amiable sentiment, the good sense of others.

How long Mr. Homer would have attracted the admiration which he received in the morning of his ministerial life, cannot be determined. His pungent appeals to the conscience of his hearers might have increased his real power over them, and at the same time have diminished his seeming popularity; for it is not always the most popular minister who is the most influential. But until the time of his death, the interest of his people in his ministrations was regularly increasing. His visits became more and more acceptable, every sermon was thought to be more powerful than the preceding, and his last appearance in the pulpit is described by them as if they had seen an angel. "Those who were absent from his church on a Sabbath would often come to me," said one of his parishioners, "and ask me to repeat what I could remember of his sermon; and his arrangement was so lucid that I could easily recall his main ideas." Many of his hearers are described as fixing their eyes upon him steadfastly, and as giving to him that earnest attention which a minister loves to receive. "The house was so still that the slightest whisper could be heard in it." He secured the esteem of other denominations as well as of his own, and was useful not only as the minister of a sect, but as a teacher of the whole community. After the lapse of more than a year, his incidental remarks are daily quoted, and the veneration for his memory has excited the wonder of strangers who have casually visited the place. So strong and deep and long continued an impression upon so intelligent a people, is one sign of his power and worth. Had he labored among them a third of a century, rather than a third of a year, we might have anticipated the influence that is still exerted by his precepts and example. But we did not expect that he would have compressed into four months, the efficiency of a long life. "Honorable age

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is not that which standeth in length of time, nor which is measured by number of years; but wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age."

MR. HOMER AS A PREACHER.

There are various standards of pulpit eloquence, no one of which can be praised to the exclusion of any other. "Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." A true liberality of christian taste will be gratified with the doctrines of the gospel though they be administered in varying forms. All ministers need not write and speak "just as we do." Men of narrow views would fain banish from the pulpit every preacher who is not elegant and refined, but the great Reformer said, "Human nature is a rough thing and must have some rough ministers to chastise it." There is a class of the community who never will be reached by softnesses and delicacies of language. We often hear it said that all abstruse reasoning and recondite speculation are unseemly for the pulpit. But there are some hearers who demand a philosophical style of address, and will listen to none but philosophical preachers. Others are prejudiced against the refinements of language and the graces of delivery. No one, they say, was ever converted by a metaphor, and poetry is neither "doctrine, nor reproof, nor correction, nor instruction in righteousness." But there are men of poetical fancy in our parishes, and they are as immortal as men of business, and have as much need of salvation, and are as much entitled to be addressed in an ornate style as children are in a simple one or mathematicians in a dry one. "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts."

It is not claimed that Mr. Homer's discourses present a model to which all ministers should conform, but they meet

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one demand of our natures which is too seldom gratified. He was not a rude preacher, but he was plain-spoken when he thought it desirable to be so; he was not distinctively a metaphysical preacher, but he did not always avoid severity of argument. He had more depth of thought than men of his physical conformation are often supposed to have. He was not large of stature, he walked with sprightliness, his voice though masculine was not deep-toned, and he was not clumsy in his attitudes. Now a man who is thus formed will be regarded by some as less profound, than those who have a heavy movement and a very deep enunciation. So much are men affected, consciously or unconsciously, by the outward appearance, in judging of the inward character. The nodosities of the oak are deemed essential to its strength. But if the subject of this memoir had been inferior to the majority of students in mental vigor or acumen, he would not have been so enthusiastic and persevering in his study of the Greek orators and critics, nor would he have selected Bishop Butler as the companion of his leisure hours. But he was sensitive rather than profound, and literary rather than scientific. His superiority lay in his quick sympathies with the beautiful and the good, in his ardent and varied emotion, and in the versatile energies of his mind. He was a man of taste. He would gaze in silence at an Andover sunset until the last golden tint had vanished. He would instinctively stop his walk, that he might listen to the song of a bird. Some graceful or majestic sentence in Jeremy Taylor or Richard Hooker was ever present in his memory. By his multifarious reading, especially in the ancient classics, he had acquired a flexible style of composition; and this, united with his freshness of feeling, his earnest and natural delivery, gave an extemporaneous air to his written discourses. It was by his delicacy of sentiment, his elastic fancy, and the gracefulness of his inner and outer man, that he would most easily have distinguished himself above his brethren in the pulpit. Those who read

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his published sermons will perceive his blandness of temper, and the mellowness of his social and christian spirit, his refined and classic taste, his well stored memory. But some of his qualities as a preacher are not so distinctly visible in his printed discourses, as in those which are excluded by want of space from the present volume. A few of the characteristics which are prominent in his unpublished sermons may here be mentioned.

He was a systematic preacher. It is not meant that he adjusted the thoughts of every single discourse with logical exactness, but each of his sermons was a part of an extended series. No one of them was a mere isolated address. This discourse was designed to modify the impression of that, and that was intended to prepare the way for a third, and the third was not complete without reference to others. He had formed the plan for his pulpit efforts for several months or even years to come. He had already commenced two series of doctrinal sermons, although he deemed it inadvisable to announce the fact that he was preaching the parts of a system. One of these courses was on the character and state of man; another on the existence and attributes of God. He had written two sermons in the first course and four in the second, and had sketched the topics and divisions for seven or eight lectures in a third course.

Mr. Homer aimed to unite in his sermons, the doctrinal, the historical and the practical element. "It will be one object of my preaching," he said from the pulpit on the Sabbath after his ordination, "to present in a systematic form the doctrines of our evangelical faith—such as I find them in the word of God, or the revelation of our own consciousness. I am persuaded that there is a way of making the sternest theology come home to the human bosom, and of clothing the dry bones of metaphysical belief with the breathing forms of life. I believe that the minds of my people will be greatly enlarged and invigorated by contemplating such

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subjects as the nature and character and law of God, the free agency and immortality of the human soul, and I am encouraged in guiding you to these investigations, by the assurance that though they lead us through fields of mystery, though they demand a concentration of thought from which the effeminate may well shrink, though they constrain us often, after all our toils, to sit down and mourn over our own littleness, yet they all end in practical religion, in a clearer defining of the relation between God and man, in a louder enforcement of human duty, in a surer guidance to heaven.[1]

"I shall aim also to have much of my preaching historical in its style, because I look upon that historical book, the Bible, as a good model for the discourses of the pulpit. The taste for history in the human mind ought to be gratified, especially when it can be made the avenue for communicating so much spiritual truth. The scenes and characters of the Old and New Testament, from the antiquated form in which they are presented, and chiefly from our familiarity with the language of the story, have lost their interest to us. We read over and over again the most thrilling incidents with no emotion. Now here is a field for the preacher to enter, laborious indeed, but in the highest degree exciting and useful. He may embellish the old narrative with the lights of modern study, he may transform the language of history into a dramatic and life-like diction, bringing the scene home to the sympathies of his people, and then applying the distant and past, to the present and near.[2]

"But it is the chief intellectual glory of evangelical preaching that it is addressed to the conscience. It is interesting to notice how the ministry that arouses this inward monitor, that calls into exercise this great faculty of the soul, will preserve its power and exert its charm over intellectual men. I

[1] See Appendix to the Memoir, Note A.

[2] See Appendix to the Memoir, Note B.

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wish to be distinctly understood at the outset of my ministry, that I expect to gratify rather than offend men by stirring up their consciences, and if I am ever so unfortunate as to lose the respect and friendship of my people, I hope I shall have sense enough to attribute the failure to anything rather than the closeness of my preaching. I should be as much ashamed of myself, if I could give no better reason for losing my hearers, as I should of those who could dislike me for no better cause. There was a distinguished evangelical divine, who commenced his ministrations in one of our cities, at a time when a lax theology had begun to 'fill the pulpit and empty the pews.' Crowds thronged around the man of God, and among them the men of fashion and might and mind, whose names were enrolled among the congregations of the chapels of ease, but whom the Sabbath evening lecture would gather in to listen with awe and admiration to the doctrines they would rather die than believe. Sometimes the appeal was so pungent that they went out foaming with rage, and vowing that they would hear the fanatic no more. Still, there was a strange charm in that eye of reproof, which followed them through the week, and the next Sabbath evening bell would find them turning the despised corner, and making their way through the crowded aisle, and bracing themselves for another shock. The truth was, there was a demand in their higher nature which was not met by the weak and sickly homilies of their own preachers. They wanted something vigorous to grapple with, something that stirred up from the lowest depths the stagnant elements of their moral nature. They wanted stronger meat to satisfy the importunate cravings of minds that were well fed on every other subject but religion. And they found what they wanted for intellectual gratification in those manly views of doctrine, and those plain reproofs of sin. Tell me not then, ye timid spirits, oh talk not of the inexpediency of preaching to the conscience, when a distinguished writer has said, 'Raise me

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but a barn, in the very shadow of St. Paul's cathedral, and with the conscience-searching powers of a Whitefield, I will throng that barn with a multitude of eager listeners, while the matins and vespers of the cathedral shall be chanted to the statues of the mighty dead.'"

In his practical preaching Mr. Homer designed to be moral as well as evangelical. He had himself been desirous of attaining the virtues of a man, as well as the graces of a Christian, and it was natural to expect that he would strive to ornament, as well as to sanctify the souls of his people. His sermons are in this respect a fair index of his character. In a letter to a candidate for the ministry, he says, "Let me advise you to dwell much in your sermons on an elevated christian morality. Such a subject would be peculiarly adapted to the wants of such a people as yours, and is required for counteracting the Antinomian tendencies of the present age. This is a subject which has been forced upon me of late, by flagrant instances of criminality in the church and the ministry, which seem to indicate that one can be a good Christian and a very bad man. The fact seems to be, that in avoiding the cold and sordid system of those who choose to call themselves rational rather than evangelical, some of us have run to the other extreme. What are technically called the 'doctrines of grace,' have been so exclusively preached by some, that their relative beauty is impaired and the symmetry of the character formed on them is disturbed. There are Christians who seem to have not very elevated views of the duty of speaking and acting the truth, and of other matters equally trite and simple. The minister who in the present day should preach up the ten commandments with the aid of our Saviour's exegesis, and should follow them into all their spiritual signification, would do much to purify the church. He would secure one of the chief beauties of grace which is *fruit*. He would come down artfully, yet with all the power of the gos-

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pel, upon the moral men who care not for religion; for where is there true morality, spiritual obedience to the law on Sinai, except in the bosom that has felt the power of the cross? He would teach his people the important truth that the best Christians are not those who merely feel, but those who do likewise."

It has already been remarked that Mr. Homer was faithful in his public reproofs of sin. Some of his friends, knowing the gentleness of his nature, supposed that he might be more complaisant in the pulpit than bold; but his character was versatile, and when he became a preacher he ceased to be a classical annotator. He accommodated himself at once to the exigencies of his office. If there be one feature of his unpublished sermons more noticeable than another, it is the pungency, the severity of his denunciation against sin and sinners, against the pride of the rich, the envy and demureness of the poor, the ingratitude of both classes to him who being rich became poor for our sake, the slothfulness and inefficiency of the church, the hard-heartedness and obstinacy of the world. The fact is, he was so kind in his feelings, so sincere in his motive and manner, so obviously intent upon doing his great work and his whole work and doing it well, that he could say anything to his people, and they would love him the more for saying it. They respected him for his reproof, it was so honest-hearted. He seemed to be so much absorbed in the subject of his discourse, and to place it so completely before himself, that all complaints against him, must first pass through the truths which he declared. He appeared to be lost in his theme, and neither to know nor care whether it would be grateful to his hearers. Few men would dare to utter some of the words which he spoke, yet he was safe in uttering them, for he was intrenched in the good will of all who heard him.

Another characteristic of Mr. Homer's unpublished dis-

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courses is individuality. He wrote as an individual, as himself. He wrote for individuals, for his own hearers, and not for his countrymen in general. One of his favorite mottos for preaching was the quaint stanza of John Bunyan:

> "Thine only way,
> Before them all, is *to say out thy say*
> *In thine own native language*, which no man
> Now useth, nor with ease dissemble can."

He did not own a book of texts which might guide him to the choice of a subject. The Bible was a sufficient text-book, and the wants of his people suggested more themes than he found time to discuss. He never could have learned to use Simeon's Skeletons, nor would Sturtevant's plan for filling out those skeletons, have been anything to his mind but confusion worse confounded. The main power of his unpublished sermons lay in the fact that they were out-flowings from his own mind and heart. They abound with passages that would arrest the attention of every hearer, not so much because they were brilliant as because they were natural, and nature, wherever and whatever it be, will command the sympathies of men; not so much because they contained new truths as because they were shaped in a new way, and the way was appropriate not to ministers in general, but to Mr. Homer, not to all people but to the people at South Berwick, not on all occasions but on the very Sabbath, and that part of the Sabbath when the sermon was preached.

In illustrating the idea that spiritual wakefulness does not consist in dreaming about realities, he writes in one of his sermons, "Upon my own mind, overworked with study, or overburdened with care, the night has sometimes stolen in the full tide of my excited action, and there is not one of the duties of my pastoral vocation that I have not performed in my sleep. But I never value these mental exercises for then

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I am not awake. The sleep may be diseased and uneasy, it may give no rest to the tossing spirit, but it is sleep still."

In the same discourse, he says, "Neither does spiritual wakefulness consist in a momentary starting up from sleep. The slothful man often has these temporary starts, and through his half-closed eyelids, he looks out of the window at the thorns and the nettles, and the broken down wall. But he begs for a little more sleep and a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep, and before his words are uttered, he has again sunk down in unconscious stupor. O, how often have I watched the emotions that struggle on the face of some habitual sleeper in church! Conscience sits there on his forehead to raise the falling lid, and the lip quivers with many a wakeful purpose; but the eye is vacant, instead of being fixed with a becoming resolution, and the good man, amid a thousand fears and doubts and wishes and plans to keep awake, is again overcome."

At the close of a sermon on the Eternity of God, he says, "It is a terrible thing to sin against such a being; against a being who stands still while we are moving on, with whom our ages of forgetfulness are all one moment, and in whose mind our sins, though committed long and long ago, are as fresh and as clear as the present. My aged friend, there was a certain sin which you committed in early youth. Its remorseful pangs are now all obliterated. Its very features are fading, fast fading from view. Idly you imagine that by the day of your death, or a few ages of eternity onward, it will be all gone. But no! with the great I AM there can be no forgetfulness; no ocean of time sweeps over him its oblivious current; your sin is safe, safe in a mind that cannot grow old. My young friend, you have been sinning to-day. God saw you, you know he did. This morning you disobeyed your mother, this forenoon you have been trifling in the house of God, this noon you are going into the Sabbath school with no

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love for the Bible; you will go home to seek the idle story rather than the book that tells about Jehovah, and to-night, —mark my words and prove me if they are not true,—to-night, when you lie down to rest, it shall be written against you in your own conscience, that you are a sabbath-breaker. Yet to-morrow you will forget it all, and you think because you have forgotten it, it will be all over. But ah! there is no to-morrow with the God who looks down upon your sin. To-morrow, and next week, and next year, and next century, and on and on into eternity, the great I AM is; and he looks down forever with the same fixed gaze upon the sin you commit to-day. And when it has become far, far distant from your own eye, if the film of eternal ages could gather over it, it is always just as close and present to his searching gaze. My friends, how sad to think that every sin becomes eternal from the eternity of that being who sees it; and when we sin one moment, we do that which God must abhor forever and ever. But still more sad, when in another world we shall ourselves be armed with a like power; when to our own consciences, in their resurrection day, the past must seem like the present; when sins between which there was an interval of weeks and months and years shall all rise up together, an exceeding great army; when eternity shall be a mirror in which the great past is ever reflected like an eternal Now. And in that work of retribution, unless we have secured an advocate and a refuge, the great I AM will stand over us and say,—not for *those*, but for *these*, not you *were*, but you *are*, you *are* my enemies."

So far was Mr. Homer from adopting the general style of address which may apply to everybody or anybody or nobody in the congregation, a style which is intended to please that class of hearers who are ever appropriating to their neighbors, what ought to have been designed for themselves, he particularized his hearers and addressed his reproofs to "the sinners in

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this house," "in these pews," "to you who are slighting your early baptism," "to you who are violating your sacramental vow," to those listless hearers, "from whose iron visages the words bound back into the preacher's face," and in a single instance he addresses a rebuke to "one or two persons among those who worship in this temple," and who would neither misapprehend nor dislike his open-hearted fidelity. In his delivery he used the "indicative gesture," and the spirit of his language was, "Thou art the man." He once wrote a sermon chiefly for the sake of benefiting a single individual. If he had not possessed and been known to possess a harmless temper, this individualizing process would have become an offensive personality. But a good reputation, like the shield of faith, will ward off the fiery darts of many who obey not the truth.

Nearly allied to the individuality of his discourses is their simplicity. There may be a want of this excellence in his choice of words, and he was too fond of the Greek inversion in his arrangement of them. But in the spirit and genius of his discourses, there is much of that intangible quality which so many writers have vainly attempted to describe. He gives frequent specimens of what Marmontel calls, "that sort of amiable ingenuousness or undisguised openness which seems to give us some degree of superiority over the person who shows it; a certain infantine simplicity which we love in our hearts, but which displays some features of the character that we think we should have wit enough to hide; and which therefore always leads us to smile at the person who discovers this quality." The secret of the pleasure we derive from such a character is found in its freedom from artifice. We are interested in the friend or companion who is not perpetually asking himself, how will my words sound to others? what will the people think of this deed or that? but who is willing to act out his own impulses under the appropriate operation of some truth present to his mind. This sort of

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simplicity is manifested in ways innumerable. When one utters a trite idea without the least suspicion that it will be considered too unimportant to be expressed in such sober language, as when Izaak Walton says that Sir Henry Wotton "retired into his study, and there made many of his papers, that had passed his pen both in the days of his youth and in the busy part of his life, useless by a fire made there to that purpose;" when one makes a statement which will be received with incredulity or with ridicule, and makes it without the least apparent apprehension that it will be misunderstood or abused, as when the honest Izaak says of the same Sir Henry, who was suspected of a plagiarism, that "reason mixed with charity should persuade us to believe that Sir Henry's mind was so fixed on that part of the communion of saints which is above, that a holy lethargy did surprise his memory," or when one exposes his own secret fears and failings with the guilelessness of a man who does not dream that others are watching his frailties, in these, and numberless other modes we are touched and won upon by that simplicity which has been called the "nameless grace of an imperfect man." In his unpublished sermons Mr. Homer has communicated many thoughts which his brethren in the ministry might thank him for expressing, and still excuse themselves from uttering the same. We often love to have things said, but not exactly to say them ourselves. He expressed his honest feelings in an honest way. Critics may smile at his childlike frankness, but men and women and children will sympathize with such a minister far more than with one who measures his sentences, and never speaks without calculating the results of each syllable. However correct the words may be, if they seem to have come from the public mint, and not to be part and parcel of the speaker himself, they are stale and powerless. They are coined words, but human nature cries out for words that flow forth spontaneously. They are stamped words, but it is the living and

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breathing phrase that reaches the hidden places of the heart. They are indeed safe words, producing no kind of evil because they produce no kind of effect. It will always be true of them, that they are better fitted for posterity than for any living generation. He who is "coldly correct and critically dull" may satisfy a reviewer, but never melts the spirit of a man.

Taking a great interest in the fruits of his mental toil, Mr. Homer was not ashamed to confess that, on *his own* account as well as for *their* good, he desired the regular attendance of his people at church. He not only taught them that they might become better, but he owned that he should *feel better*, if they were constant in their visits to the sanctuary. "I entreat you," he says, "that you be not over scrupulous about the height of the thermometer, or the aspect of the clouds on a Sabbath morning, that you doom not the preacher to come in from a lowering and desolate sky to the more desolate scenes of an empty church. I mean not to intrude upon the delicacies of life, and I know there are many constitutions that will not bear an exposure to the inclemency of the storm. I leave every man's conscience to be his bodily physician. But I beg of you to be consistent patients; for that admirable doctor is never more stupid than under the sound of a church-going bell, and if the fireside of home looks inviting, and the storm beats cheerlessly against the window, above all if the heart from within does not cry out for the courts of the Lord, it is easy, too easy to get an invalid's exemption from our unscientific guide, or to conjure up some lion, in the shape of a formidable snow-drift, or a pelting rain, or a smoky house, no one of which would excuse us to a client, or a customer, but any one of them we can put off on our minister or our God. Still politeness forbids me to enter the private circle and say to this and that person, you ought to be at church; as a gentleman I leave you to judge for yourselves. But as a minister, you must excuse me if I beg of you to remember the poor

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man whose profession obliges him to go to church in all weathers, whose taste will not permit him to reward the faithful few with an old sermon, or a desultory talk inspired by empty pews, whose sense of justice obliges him to bring out the hard earnings of a week's toil, when one and another and another for whom that sermon was written are not in their seats. I say, I wish they would think of him from the good easy chair, and by the blazing hearth of home, and cast over him the wing of their sympathy if they cannot give him the light of their faces."

In the same discourse he says, "You should listen to the preaching of the gospel with a careful regard to the feelings of your minister. Remember that he is a man; by education, by profession, it may be by temperament a *sensitive* man. He has eyes that can see. He has ears that can hear. He has a heart that can feel. Let the delicate and honorable deference with which you meet him in the street, or welcome him to your dwellings, not be entirely laid aside, when he stands before you as the messenger of God. There are many persons who act as if they supposed that the eminence of the pulpit raised their minister above the level of human feelings, that it was round about him like an impregnable fortress, and every mark of contempt or disrespect or inattention from the audience falls as powerless as if he were a senseless machine. If he visit them at their homes, they would be ashamed to treat him with such coldness and scorn, and it would be deemed the lowest indecency to look out of the window, or to read a newspaper, or to drop asleep in the chair while he was talking with them; but when he stands before them in the pulpit, they borrow a license from his remoteness and his elevation, as well as from the multitude who share the responsibility of their politeness, and they never dream that it is rude and ungentlemanly, to be gazing around the house, or turning over a hymn-book, or whispering some pleasantry to a neighbor, or fixing themselves

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in a good position for sleep. The truth is, my friends, the minister is and ought to be more keenly sensitive to these marks of public disrespect, than he would be to private and personal contempt. An insult is offered to the fruits of his own mental toil. A contempt is thrown upon his high office as a preacher. The solemnly dedicated house of worship seems, in their view, to have a claim for decorum inferior to the highway or the parlor. More than all, that august Being in whose name he speaks, before whom angels cast their crowns in ceaseless adoration, Jehovah himself is repulsed by the coldness and stupidity of earthly worshippers. And I wonder how a man can preach, when such reflections are pressed upon him with overwhelming power from a careless or trifling or sleeping audience.

"Let me urge you then, as one gratification and encouragement to the preacher, to hear with the attitude and appearance of attention. I think it cannot be generally known how distinct and perfect is the observation of the audience from the pulpit. The hearer sees that the eyes of the minister are sometimes directed towards himself, but he never imagines that they distinguish him from the mass of worshippers. The fact is, the preacher from his observatory can discover everything. There is not a corner of the church which his eye does not penetrate. He traces the vacant seats in each pew and knows who is absent. He observes the position of ever hearer in the house. He hears every remote whisper. He sees every mark of frivolity. He feels every symptom of gaping listlessness. He could go round from family to family during the week, and detail with wonderful accuracy their deportment in the house of God, their interest in the Sabbath services, what they had gained and what they had lost of the sermon. Were it proper to unfold the distinct recollection of my own recent ministrations among yourselves, you would be surprised to find such minute circumstances in your past history brought back to you with the accuracy of

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present consciousness. I could speak of some who came regularly every morning and staid away regularly every afternoon; little thinking how quickly the vacant seat would be noticed, and how keenly the neglect would be felt by the stranger. I could speak of others, to whom I looked in vain, Sabbath after Sabbath and sentence after sentence, for one returning glance, to show that they saw and heard me. I could go to others and remind them that they had listened to particular parts of each sermon, and followed me with only a fitful interest. And I could speak with gratitude of the many eyes, that were fixed upon me with a uniform attention, and to which I turned from the discouraging aspect of the dull and the listless, and found unfailing relief and refreshment. I thought then, if I could only have a congregation filled with such hearers, with not one vacant look, with every form erect, with every eye fixed upon the preacher, with every feature beaming with interest and excitement, with the earnest and respectful and constant attention which the truth of God, in whatever form it be ministered, ought to receive; if I could stand up Sabbath after Sabbath, before such an audience, what a soul-stirring animation would be kindled in my speech, what a delightful glow would follow me home from my Sabbath labors, and during the weekly preparations of the study, what life and force would be breathed into me from the consciousness that I wrote for all those attentive eyes, and thought for all those excited minds, and felt for all those beating hearts.

"I am sensible that many persons have acquired a habit of listening without this attitude of attention, and we should do wrong to judge merely from the outward appearance. I have known individuals who could look up and down and everywhere except at the preacher, and seem to be intent upon everything rather than the sermon, who were at the same time pondering and treasuring every word that was uttered. But for the sake of example, and to secure that sympathy of

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interest which so quickly diffuses itself through a whole congregation, I would urge it upon all, to avoid that nervous restlessness which obliges them constantly to change their position or to vary their view, and would request them to keep the eye ever on the pulpit. That fixed attitude, and that earnest gaze shall secure their own reward.

"There is one other thought connected with this subject to which you will pardon me for alluding. You are aware that there is now extensively prevalent among ministers of the gospel, a singular paralysis of the vocal organs, which has driven many from their pulpits and their flocks. The disease is one which has eluded the researches of medical science, as it has baffled the reach of medical skill. But among the many theories to account for its origin, I have found none more philosophical or more consonant with my own experience, than that which attributes it to the stupidity and inattention of an audience. It is well known that there is an active sympathy between the mind and the body, and what more natural than that a depressed and embarrassed spirit should derange an organ so delicate and sensitive as the human voice. Those of you who are at all accustomed to public speaking can testify how much the ease of your utterance depends upon the interest of your audience. If you find it hard to make yourself understood, or the force of your argument falls powerless upon stupid hearers, the utterance at once becomes difficult, the mouth is quickly parched and dry, there is a choking sensation about the throat, a thousand impediments seem to check the flow of language, the speaking is all up-hill work, and you sit down with the vocal organs irritated and inflamed, and an exhaustion of your whole system tenfold greater, than if you spoke to an audience so full of sympathy and interest and excitement that the flow was easy from your heart to theirs. For myself, I confess, so great has sometimes been the physical difficulty with which I have preached to a trifling or listless congregation,

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that I have been ready to wish that in the pulpit I could be stripped of every sense and every faculty but that of speech, so that there might not come in through my eyes and my ears and my wounded sensibilities, so many impediments to the easy current of my language."

Another characteristic of Mr. Homer's performances in the pulpit was unity. He always endeavored to finish his discourses as early as the noon of Saturday, and he spent the afternoon and evening of that day in the selection of appropriate hymns, and in preparation for the unwritten exercises of the pulpit. "One thing," says a writer from South Berwick, "which could not fail to attract the notice of the most careless hearer, was the completeness and mutual harmony of all the parts of Mr. Homer's Sabbath exercises. The prayer, the sermon, the hymns were nicely adjusted portions of one well constructed whole. His hearers did not leave the sanctuary with minds distracted in the attempt to grasp two or more grand ideas, suggested by different parts of the service, but the one great truth which had been made prominent in the discourse was so often repeated in the other services, as to engross the whole attention. While the sermon was the arrow designed to reach the heart, the remaining exercises did but sharpen the point and speed the flight of that missile. He never lost sight of the truth or doctrine which he was endeavoring to establish, and rarely suffered himself to be drawn aside into any episodes, or to be diverted into the discussion of any kindred but collateral topic. The ideas suggested by the text he seemed intent on reducing to the smallest possible compass, and deriving from them the one great impression of his discourse. It may not be improper to state, in showing the benefits of this kind of preaching and the skilful manner in which he conducted it, that not a few of his hearers yet retain in memory the ground-work and detail of many of his sermons, and are able to state the general position which was

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advocated, and each argument by which it was sustained, in its order."

Another of Mr. Homer's aims in the pulpit was to give a variety of religious instruction. He who secures unity in every single discourse, may secure the greater variety in his several discourses. "There are some persons," he said to his people, "who dislike preaching on the doctrines, and others who cannot bear preaching on anything else. As a minister of Jesus I am called upon rightly to divide the truth, and I cannot please any one of these opposites to the exclusion of all the rest. It is selfish and unreasonable for one individual to set himself up as the standard for a whole congregation, and to demand a constant succession of services which will gratify himself alone, and leave many as hungry as himself unfed. Such an aristocratic and arrogant demand would be frowned down anywhere else, and I must insist upon its unreasonableness here. I beg of you, therefore, who can see no manner of profit in metaphysical refinements, or theological speculation, who are perpetually crying out for sermons on the christian virtues, for something practical to improve the life, I must beg of you not to nestle in your seats and put down your heads because to-day I strive to fortify the faith of the church, or remove the doubts of the wavering; for next Sabbath, your turn shall come, when, so help me God, I will stir up your consciences, and probe your characters, and strive to make you better men than you are. And I beg of you, if such there be, who are suspicious of every deviation from the old standards, and who would like no more variety than depravity and election to-day, election and depravity, tomorrow, I must beg of you to lay by your jealousies and anxieties, if there are some sermons where your fondly cherished formulas are not even mentioned. To the Jew I hope to become a Jew, yet not on every Sabbath; to the Greek, I will become Greek, yet not in every sermon; to each man dividing his portion in due season, if by any means I may save some."

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There is one description of the great model for all preachers, which Mr. Homer often read with delight, and spoke of as an epitome of the rules by which he meant to be guided in the sacred office. "Our Saviour," it is said, "did not address one passion or part of our nature alone, or chiefly. There was no one manner of address, and we feel sure as we read that there was no one tone. He did not confine himself to any one class of subjects. He was not always speaking of death, nor of judgment, nor of eternity, frequently and solemnly as he spoke of them. He was not always speaking of the state of the sinner, nor of repentance and the new heart, though on these subjects too he delivered his solemn message. There was a varied adaptation in his discourses, to every condition of mind and every duty of life, and every situation in which his hearers were placed. Neither did the preaching of our Saviour possess exclusively any one moral complexion. It was not terror only, nor promise only; it was not exclusively severity nor gentleness; but it was each one of them in its place, and all of them always subdued to the tone of perfect sobriety."

The general spirit of Mr. Homer's unpublished discourses may be inferred from the following part of the sermon which he delivered at the commencement of his pastoral labors.

"The dignity of the minister's office appears in the fact, that he is the instrument for supplying the spiritual wants of all classes of men. It is a great thing to labor for the mind, that priceless gem which God himself has created and adorned. It is a great thing to stir up thought, to arouse interest, to gratify taste. It is a great thing to reform the outward man, and make the principles of gospel love prevail in his conduct. It is a great thing to diffuse the leaven of peace and beauty through the whole mass of society, and make a paradise on earth. But oh, the soul, the soul! how it transcends in value

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all the interests of earth, and compared with its nature and its destiny and its high behests, how poor are all the triumphs of intellect and taste, how weak are those efforts to adorn the outward, while the inner sanctuary remains untouched. The soul has diseases, and they must be healed. The soul has longings, and they must be gratified. The soul has wanderings, and they must be checked. The soul has sorrows, and they must be stayed. The soul may die forever, and it must be clothed in the robes of eternal life. In the providence of God which places me here to-day, while I would not be unfaithful to the other parts of my calling, I desire to look upon every thing as inferior and subordinate, except the ministering to the immortal spirit. In all the variety of characters and conditions around me, I feel that there is not one to whom I have not some message, and for whom there is not in the gospel I preach a fit and full supply. Is there a Christian among my people who pants for a closer walk with God, whose soul disdains the unsubstantial vanities of the world, who cries out daily with ceaseless cravings, 'O that I knew where I might find him,' to him am I sent, to be his guide and shepherd, to minister the food of God's word, to brighten and animate his faith and hope for the future. Brother, we will commune together of the love of Jesus, and the interests of the undying soul, we will take sweet counsel and walk to the house of God in company, till our Master call us to the upper room of his feast, to the perfect union of heaven. Are there any among this church who have left their first love, whose faith stumbles, whose hope has become dim, and the world binds them as with a magic spell to its deceitful charms. Wanderers of the flock, I would call you back to the altar of your baptism and your vows before angels and men, and light again the extinguished zeal, sometimes by the solemn denunciation of a 'woe upon them that are at ease in Zion,' sometimes in the winning invitation of the faithful, 'Come with us, and we will show you good.' Are there among you the hard-heart-

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ed, the men of the world, whom I shall learn to honor and respect and love only to be more deeply convinced of their deplorable nakedness of soul? O! my friends, by the sacred rights of conscience, by the precious interests of the church, by the vows of God, which must curse me forever if I prove recreant to my calling, I dare not shun to declare unto you the whole counsel of God. I cannot hide or extenuate your nature and character and condition. I cannot soften the demands of God, or smooth over the dreadful consequences of your impenitence. In all meekness and humility, in all tenderness and friendship, yet with plainness and with strictness, I must beseech you, in Christ's stead, by the value you put upon your souls, by the love you bear to your minister, by the power of your corrupt example, by the mercies of God, by the terrors of hell, I must beseech you to come out from the world, and take your stand among the humble disciples of the Redeemer. Are there here any restless, dissatisfied spirits to whom the world is losing its charm, in whose bosoms there is an aching void which the old delights cannot supply, who long to be numbered among the followers of Jesus? Inquirers of the way to Zion, to you, to you, I bring glad tidings of great joy. Lo! Christ has died for your sins, yea and has risen again, as if to proclaim new life to your long dead spirits. O ye dry bones that begin to shake, hear the word of the Lord. Come forth from your entombment. Thrust aside the grave-clothes of sin. Arise, and live, and walk, and work, and it shall be well with you. And in those seasons of trial and sorrow which must bow the hearts of my people, whether the sadness of a general calamity brood as with raven wing over your dwellings, or one after another you come up to the house of God, with tottering footsteps and heads bowed down like a bulrush, and the weeds of mourning and the sighings of solitude to remind us that you are alone, you shall find in the gospel of Jesus a warm sympathy to lighten your sorrow, and elevated principles to con-

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form your faith. The strain of comfort which it breathes, shall be, 'Come unto me, ye that are weary and heavy laden,' and the profound lesson it teaches, 'All things shall work together for good to them that love God.' The gospel of Jesus leads in life to that which is above life. It leads beyond life to heaven."

In reviewing Mr. Homer's sermons, our chief regret is that he wrote them so rapidly. He exchanged but three times after his ordination, and never preached extempore on the Sabbath. He was compelled therefore to write two discourses in a week, in some instances he wrote more. But a single written sermon in six days is labor enough for any man. Wise critics have recommended that a minister write a good discourse as soon as he can, and preach it when it is "about finished." If Saturday noon find him unprepared for the Sabbath, let him furnish his people with the best instruction he can command, either by an exchange or by an extemporaneous effort. That good and finished sermon will benefit his own character, moral as well as mental, more than a score of careless and hurried homilies. It will give him more authority over his people, secure for them a juster balance of theological truth, a higher standard of religious feeling. It is by a thorough examination of some one doctrine, and by an accurate adjustment of its collateral topics, that the minister advances and causes his people to advance every month in spiritual power. When he is removed by death, the sermons which he has elaborated with so much care will retain a permanent value, and he will preach long after his voice is stilled. The editor of Massilon's Lent Sermons regards it as a prodigy that he finished a discourse in so short a time as ten or twelve days. This eminent preacher sometimes rewrote a single sermon fifteen or even twenty times. A distinguished scholar in our own land rewrote the most useful of his sermons thirteen or fourteen times,

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and labored in connexion with a literary friend two whole days on as many sentences. A living divine, who has been called the prince of our pulpit orators, spent a fortnight on a single paragraph of one of his published sermons, and three months in elaborating another discourse, which has already accomplished more good than the four thousand sermons which were written by another of our pastors, at the rate of two a week. On the blank leaf of one of Dr. Griffin's manuscripts it appeared that his discourse had been preached ninety times. Thus had it been touched and retouched, reviewed and rewritten, until, so far as the author's power availed, it was perfected. There is danger indeed of acquiring a morbid appetency for perfection, which will polish away all positive excellence, and refine into nothing every natural beauty. We have read of an Italian author who would whet and whet his knife till there was no steel left to make an edge. "Indeed," says Carlyle, "in all things, writing or other, which a man engages in, there is the indispensablest beauty in knowing *how to get done*. A man frets himself to no purpose, he has not the sleight of the trade, he is not a craftsman but an unfortunate borer and bungler, if he know not when to have done. Perfection is unattainable; no carpenter ever made a mathematically right angle, in the world; yet all carpenters know when it is right enough, and do not botch it and lose their wages in making it too right. Too much pains-taking speaks disease in one's mind as well as too little. The adroit, sound-minded man will endeavor to spend upon each business approximately what of pains it deserves; and with a conscience void of remorse will dismiss it then."

But Mr. Homer was not predisposed to this sickliness of taste. If he had concentrated upon seventeen sermons the energies which he devoted to thirty-four, he would not indeed have gratified his parish with so frequent ministrations, but would have raised, still higher than he did, the standard of a sermon, and would have made his posthumous influence more

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extensive. His people however were idolatrously attached to him, and were intent on hearing him every Sabbath. Therefore he became unwilling to relieve himself by exchanges with his brethren. He moreover loved his work, and chose in his hearty zeal to compress a great amount of it into a brief period. Though he was technically a student, and had not designed to pass his life in the pastoral relation, he began to doubt whether he could ever forego the pleasure of writing sermons. The more he wrote, the happier he became. About a fortnight before his last sickness he said in a letter, "Preaching *grows* upon me. It never tires nor palls. It appears to be the most glorious of all pursuits. If my health is spared, and God seems to bless my labors, I shall feel very differently about leaving the ministry from what I have felt. I do not know that I shall turn off from the literary design which has occupied my thoughts for so many years. Still I cannot but feel that if I ever do leave the sacred office, for any other on earth, it will be taking a long stride downward."

It deserves to be added in apology for his rapid composition, that Mr. Homer had been gathering the fruits of christian experience for nearly fourteen years, and had accumulated the materials of his discourses long before he wrote them. They were the emanations of the character which he had been forming, and he could express with ease the trains of thought which had been familiar to him for years. Whatever he did was done with celerity; this was his nature. The results therefore of his past religious meditations he recorded without the effort and delay which ministers often require. It may be that after he had gone round a certain circle of topics, he would have chosen to spend a longer time on every new theme. Every scholar has a certain class of subjects upon which he has perhaps unconsciously expended a peculiar degree of care, and when these are exhausted he becomes once more a novice. On some themes old men are

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young and young men are old. We are apt to regard the efforts of a youthful preacher as the very beginnings of his work, as mere experiments; but they are often the results of nearly all the wisdom which he will have acquired in maturer life. He may afterward discuss new topics with superior power, and may not, but on some topics his first sermons are his best. Some of our most useful treatises, in theological as well as other literature, have been the productions of men under twenty-five years of age. There is a rare justness in the following criticism of Mr. Hazlitt: "The late Mr. Opie remarked, that an artist often puts his best thoughts into his first works. His earliest efforts were the result of the study of all his former life, whereas his later and more mature performances, though perhaps more skilful and finished, contained only the gleanings of his after observation and experience."

MR. HOMER'S LAST DAYS.

On the Sabbath after his ordination, Mr. Homer said to his people, "We live in a solemn world. We cannot take a step where sad realities do not stare us in the face. We cannot form a new tie without casting our thoughts forward to the death-pang that must sunder it. Amid the mutual rejoicings of our recent connexion, I involuntarily think of the pall and the shroud and the bier and the grave; and I behold one and another and another, who now look up into my face and hear the sound of my voice, for whose cold remains I shall be called ere long to discharge the last sad offices; and God only knows but that this people may bear me out to my burial. Sabbath after Sabbath, I must stand up here as a dying man before dying men. Yet, blessed be God, I preach a gospel which secures the great antidote to these ills, which enables us to look above and beyond them. And if my people will resolve this day to put themselves under my spiritual

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guardianship, and heaven will bless the ministry which begins on my part in weakness and distrust, we may hush these dark forebodings, we may rest assured that death cannot weaken the tie now formed, we may look forward to a gladsome reunion where the sombre weeds of the funeral shall be exchanged for the white vestments of the marriage-feast, and the happy language of the pastor shall be, 'Behold I and the people thou hast given me.'"

On the New Year's Sabbath of his ministry, he preached from the text, "This year thou shalt die," the same passage with which so many divines, and among them both the Edwardses, have commenced the pulpit services of the last year of their life. In this discourse he showed the probability that either himself or some of his hearers would be called to fulfil the prediction of the text. "The night," he says, "is far spent, the day is at hand; some of us can almost discern the first red streaks of the dawn. We are hastening on, we are hastening on to the brightness of an eternal day. 'Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light.'"

It is not to be understood that Mr. Homer had a presentiment of his early death. He had not. He was not given to such presentiments. Nor had his friends been fearful of such a calamity. They had not thought of him in such associations, and even now they cannot recall the freshness of his countenance and the elasticity of his manners, without feeling that after all they have been only dreaming of his death, and he is soon to appear again with some bright saying or with some new hope. It had not even occurred to their thoughts that the star would sink away into nothing, just as men were beginning to turn their glasses to it and examine it.

When a Christian has toiled faithfully and successfully through a long life, he lies down upon the bed of death as the bed of rest. He has finished the work which was given him to do, and if by reason of strength his life should be further

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prolonged, yet would his strength be labor and sorrow. He chooses to leave the world, that he may escape the weariness of a second childhood, and may commune again with the friends of his youth. His age is well rounded off, and death calls for his gratitude rather than resignation. But the subject of this memoir had not been satiated nor disgusted with life, nor was he shut up to death as his only avenue to enjoyment. The hopes and the promises of youth were clustering around him, he had just begun to use the materials which he had amassed; to die, therefore, as soon as he had ended the preliminaries of his chosen work, was not so much to leave the world as to be torn from it. He had but recently entered upon that state which is but a figure of the union between Christ and the church, and to go so soon from the companionship which he had anticipated so long, was something to be submitted to rather than rejoiced in. His plans were definitely formed for a life of study, he had numbered the mines of intellectual wealth which he was to explore, and he had every inducement to cry, "Cut me not down in the midst of my years, deprive me not of the residue of my days."

His unremitted labors during his last year at Andover had somewhat enfeebled his frame, and should have induced him to defer his settlement in the ministry for several months. Emerging suddenly from the seclusion of a student into the duties of active life, he was more excited than he would have been if the transition had been more gradual, or if he had previously disciplined himself, as every clergyman ought to do, in some active business. The excitement was greater than he could sustain without a more healthful regimen of body than he was careful to practise. The labors of an earnest preacher and an anxious pastor cannot be united with those of a severe student, without a previous and careful preparation of the body as well as mind. This preparation Mr. Homer did not make, and here was "the beginning of the end." He felt a degree of interest in his labors which his

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physical system had not been disciplined to endure. He visited the sick chamber with literal sickness of heart, and when called to attend a funeral, he felt as one personally bereaved. On the Sabbath morning he would rise before the sun and look out of his study-window, in the hope of seeing a clear sky. There were only six Sabbaths of his ministry on which he was favored with such a prospect. To him they were days of delight; but the hail and the sleet and the snow sent a chill into his spirit. "Again and again have I written a sermon," he says, "for Christians; and many of them were prevented by the weather from hearing it. Then I have written for the impenitent, and those for whom I particularly designed my discourses did not come through the snow-banks to hear me. During my wedding journey, at the time of my ordination and through my whole ministry thus far, I have been persecuted by a storm." He was desirous of seeing an immediate influence from every sermon, and was grieved if he did not see it. Time would have allayed the intensity of this desire, and sheathed the keen edge of the sympathetic nerve. But he died before the time. The truths which he uttered from the pulpit so absorbed his attention, that they often awaked him by night. Sometimes he would forget even to eat, until the studies of the day were closed, and in the evening would take that refreshment which he could not live without, but which he ought to have taken at an earlier hour. He had been crowding the winter with disproportioned labors, and was hoping to pass the more genial months of spring in visiting his parishioners and journeying among his friends. He did not dream that when the trees were blossoming and the time of the singing of birds had come, he should be walking in the paradise of God.

Sad, sad is the reflection, that he did not listen to the remonstrances of his friends, and endeavor to allay the zeal that was consuming him. Hitherto his books had been his only care, and that care was a pleasure, and every thing that inter-

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fered with their claims had been done for him by others; now he was called to do every thing for himself. But yesterday he was a pupil; all at once he had become a teacher, and was invested with the most responsible office on earth. His responsibility was so new to him that it imparted a factitious strength to his system, and he looked upon the admonitions of his friends as needless. "Have no anxiety for me," he often said, "for I am never sick. Every day is my mind becoming more and more active, and my labors easier and easier. I can write three discourses now more readily than I could write one a year ago, and instead of finding it difficult to preach, I find it difficult to refrain from preaching. Subjects of sermons, and plans for writing them, and thoughts for filling out those plans are thronging in upon me, till I know not what to do with them for their multitude." He did not perceive that his mind was loosing itself from his body, and was acting with the rapidity of a disencumbered spirit. He did not perceive that his physical state, as it predisposed him to a more fervid activity, was in the more peculiar need of rest.

But during the first week of March he began to acknowledge what his friends had long seen, his increasing feebleness of body; and he promised that if they would allow him to write his two discourses during that week, he would forthwith relax the severity of his labors. He wrote his two sermons, performed certain parochial duties which would at any time have oppressed his spirit, and on Sabbath morning was again frowned upon by the storm that had so long haunted him like a spectre, and cast a gloom over his labors in the pulpit. He was so feeble that he ought not to have left his room on that inclement morning, but he could not be persuaded to omit the service. He preached with the power of one who was uttering his last words, and administered the sacramental supper with unusual solemnity. At the close of his exercises in the afternoon he visited the sick bed of a literary friend,

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who was in the same state of delirium in which himself was destined soon to be. He was troubled in spirit that his friend was apparently so near the grave, and could receive no consolation. But the wearied pastor had done all that he could do, had whispered in the ear of the wandering invalid, "Be of good cheer," and bidding farewell to the hope of ever speaking to him again, he returned to his lodgings disconsolate and spent. Now he was ready to relinquish his toils and regain his lost vigor. But he had deferred his duty too long. His repose came too late. His sick friend recovered. He himself was sinking into the same disease.

On the evening of this Sabbath, the seventh of March, he was visited by his physician, and found to be in a state of great debility; his brain and nervous system morbidly sensitive, and his digestive organs much deranged. The sensibility of the cerebro-spinal system was soon allayed, but it returned after several days and was accompanied with despondency, a disinclination to converse, and a decided impression that he should never regain his health. For three or four days he retained this impression in silence and in sorrow. He struggled with it alone, but did not reveal his fears, and never exhibited the slightest disposition to murmur. On the evening of the seventeenth, he called his physician to his bedside and said that, having watched carefully his feelings and the progress of his disorder, he was decidedly convinced that all was over with him for this world. "I am," he said, "a dying man. My end is near. My mind, at times, is bewildered and gone. It will shortly all be gone. I am incapable of connected ideas, or continued thought upon any subject for any length of time. I shall soon be senseless. I feel that my race is run. I am hovering near eternity. My dear friend, comfort, oh comfort my wife when I am gone. Say to my dear church, that I have endeavored to be faithful to my trust and to their souls. But I fear that I have come short, very far short of my duty. Had it pleased God, I should

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have been happy to live an humble instrument in his hand of winning souls to my Saviour. It was my wish to have done some good in life. My heavenly Father however has decided otherwise. My hopes, my plans, my expectations will soon be closed in death." He was asked by his physician, "How do you feel in prospect of a change of worlds?" He replied, "My mind is calm. I am going to the bosom of my God. Through Jesus Christ, my hope, my Saviour, I trust that I shall soon be one of the humble worshippers about his throne."

On the morning of the eighteenth, the evil that he had feared came upon him. He had often expressed his dread of insanity. He trembled, he said, lest when his judgment had lost its controlling power, he should say something or do something to the dishonor of religion. His mind now became like a broken harp, which after the strings are severed will send forth at times a sweet and strange music. There were vibrations of his pious feeling which were not stilled even by insanity. In his mental wanderings he went over and over the scenes of his ministry, and lingered with peculiar fondness amid the duties of his last Sabbath. He would often utter fragments of sermons to his people, would offer an earnest prayer as if he were still leading their public devotions, and was several times engaged in distributing the sacramental emblems. He talked of a speedy revival of religion which his people were to enjoy, and of a protracted meeting in which all his hearers were to be converted. "But I am going," he says, "to banquet with the angels." "It seems to me," said one of his watchers, who had spent the night in listening to his airy fancies, "it seems to me that I shall never look upon the world as I have looked upon it, for I have been all night long in company with the angels;" so frequent had been the converse of the dying pastor with the pure spirits of heaven. There were lucid intervals during his delirium, but they were intervals of a moment. He would begin some soothing remark, but his reason would vanish ere

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he had closed it. A few fragments of sentences are preserved, which like the fragments of a Grecian pillar indicate the chasteness of what is lost. "Oh! if it were not for that sweet assurance,"—and then his mind darted back behind the cloud. "By the preciousness of the love of Jesus,"—and then he lost himself amid scenes of terror. "In the morning," he said, as the rays of the sun beamed upon him, "in the morning how beautiful, and at night how horrible."—"I pray that I may never murmur against the will of God even in my acutest pains."

On the Saturday preceding his death, there was an interval of fifteen minutes in which he seemed entirely rational. He asked his wife if she knew him. She answered, "Yes." He smiled and said in a whisper, for he was too feeble to speak aloud, "I thought I was too near eternity for even you to know me. I have been thinking how much happiness we have enjoyed by our own fireside, and it seems mysterious that we should be separated so soon. I have felt at times, that after all, God would spare me to you; but I feel now that he will take me away." She said to him, "I hope that you will still recover." "No," he replied, "I shall die;" and then pausing in apparent meditation upon the pardoning love of Jesus, he added, "With that blessed assurance I am going home, never to see you again in this world." He desired to say more, but was persuaded to desist, and these were the last words which he was conscious of uttering. He said much in his subsequent delirium, and just before he lost all power of connected speech he sent a request to his church, that they should be faithful to the souls of dying men. This was his last message. Here was his ruling passion.

When his disease had reached an alarming crisis, his medical friend remained with him nearly all the time by day and night. Four consulting physicians were called in from South Berwick, Dover, Exeter and Boston. Prayers were offered for him by several private circles convened for the purpose

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in his own parish and his native city, at the daily morning prayer-meeting at Park-street church in Boston, and at the several churches of South Berwick on the Sabbath preceding his death. When the preacher in his own pulpit alluded to him, there was an audible movement throughout the congregation, and the sobbings of his people evinced the intensity of their grief. "Whoever," says one of his parishioners, "has seen a circle of mourners assembled at the bedside of a friend about to take his final departure, may have an idea of the sadness and sorrow depicted on the countenances of the people as they sat in the church; for all felt in very truth as if the father of the household were soon to be removed." For a day or two before his death, groups of men were seen in the street waiting for some messenger who might bring the last report from the sick chamber. A gentleman who had but recently fixed his residence in the village says, "Business was in a degree suspended, the usual courtesies to strangers were forgotten. Every person seemed to be absorbed in the calamity that threatened the parish. Men, women and children, from all parts of the town and from all religious societies indiscriminately, came in almost unbroken succession to inquire concerning the dying pastor. Many of them would linger about his lodgings after they had learned all that could be learned, and several seated themselves in different parts of the house and remained for hours in one posture without uttering a word. There was an unusual sobriety of deportment among the students of the academy. By abandoning their play, and by the stillness with which they left the school-room for their homes they showed that their thoughts were in the room of the dying. These and similar indications were such as a stranger could not fail to notice."[1]

[1] The preceding facts were communicated by Mr. Horace Hall, a recent member of Andover Theological Seminary. He began to write an account of these last scenes, but died before he finished it. He was attacked with the same disease which proved fatal to Mr. Ho-

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During the night of the Sabbath Mr. Homer's disease assumed a more alarming form. Congestion of the brain had passed rapidly into inflammation and effusion. The face became changed, the strength failed, and the powers of life were becoming feebler and feebler.

On Monday, the twenty-second of March, it was evident that his hour had come. Several of his parishioners were gathered around his bed, uttering no words, but unable to repress their sighs. His father was standing near with one hand raised toward heaven, and in the attitude of a man looking upward for the strength that none but Jehovah can impart. About noon those who had been watching for every change of symptom in the wasted frame, began to discover signs of returning consciousness. "If you know me press my hand," were the last words spoken to him by one who longed for another token of recognition. He quickly complied, and his continued pressure showed that his love was stronger than death. Five minutes afterward he fell asleep, and his soul awoke to an activity that shall never cease.

When death had thus finished its silent work, the mourners retired to an adjoining room and kneeled before the throne of him who had smitten them. They had no repining thoughts, but felt that sinking of nature which can be staid only at the altar of devotion.

"It was on Monday morning," says a clergyman in the vicinity of South Berwick, "that I rode over to see my departing friend. Before I reached the house over which so dark a cloud was hanging, I met one of his parishioners whom I knew to be a man of rare strength of character and firmness

mer and died in the same room, on the same couch, at about the same age, with the same painful delirium, and in less than a year from the same time. He went to South Berwick for the purpose of teaching the academy, and in the hope of enjoying the society of Mr. Homer. He arrived in season to have a few hours of intercourse with the christian scholar who was to die in a few days, and whom he himself was to follow in a few months.

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of nerve. I inquired of him at once respecting his minister; 'most gone' was all that he could say, and we parted. When the dreaded event had transpired, I went to the house of another parishioner, and after the usual civilities I sat with the family ten or fifteen minutes without their saying a word. The general feeling was too deep to be expressed. No one spoke in the street except in low tones."

Wednesday was the day of the funeral. A large concourse assembled at the church from all neighborhoods and from all the religious denominations in the town. Eighteen clergymen were present. The pulpit, the orchestra and the organ were hung in black. "I can only say of the whole scene," writes one who witnessed the same, "it was overwhelming."

One of Mr. Homer's favorite hymns, "There is an hour of peaceful rest," was sung to one of his favorite tunes. He had himself recited and sung the stanzas so often, that he seems to have selected them for his funeral dirge. Rev. Mr. Young of Dover offered the prayer. Four months previous, he had given the Right Hand of Fellowship to his friend, and now his own emotion was such as sometimes to check his utterance, and the sobs of the audience were often so loud as to make his words inaudible. Professor Edwards of Andover preached the sermon. It was one which Mr. Homer had listened to eighteen months before at Andover, and had spoken of with the interest of a man who was preparing to have it repeated at his burial. The text was 1 Corinthians 15: 53, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Rev. Mr. Holt of Portsmouth, who had recently offered the ordaining prayer, now gave the funeral address. He contrasted the mental associations of the minister bereft of his reason, and still repeating the messages of christian love, with the associations of the mere scholar or man of business; with the "*tête d'armée*" of the warrior as he died amid the raging of the elements.

When these exercises were closed, the parishioners took

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one more view of the inanimate form, and then followed it in procession to the limits of the village. There they parted from it and returned to their homes as sheep without a shepherd.

Under the care of two of the most respectable inhabitants of South Berwick, the body was conveyed to Boston. On the afternoon of the next day (Thursday), about three hundred persons assembled in the vestry of Park-street church to join in a religious service preparatory to the entombment. "Never," says the pastor of the church, "have I witnessed the manifestation of a deeper sympathy. All hearts appeared smitten, and every spirit crushed under the visitation of the Almighty." Several clergymen of the city were present, and three of them officiated in the mournful exercises, reading appropriate hymns and Scriptures, offering prayers to God and addressing the assembly. "At length," writes a former companion of the departed, "the crowds of sympathizing friends, after lingering a moment in groups around the coffin, gradually withdrew and the church was almost deserted. Out of Mr. Homer's very large circle of literary friends, many of whom had not yet heard of his death, there were only five who now stood together for their last lingering look. It was hard to part even with the clay, that had been animated by such a spirit. The expression of sharp pain had passed from the features, there was a repose upon the countenance, and the fixed gaze of a moment brought back to the lips their natural smile. We turned away from the loved remains, and the closing of the coffin-lid told us that the face of our friend was hid forever from our eyes. We followed the bearers into the open air, and then into the aisle of the dead,—and stood, silent and sad, until the coffin disappeared within the tomb."

On the Sabbath succeeding the funeral, Rev. Mr. Aiken of Park-street church delineated the character of the deceas-

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ed in a sermon from Psalm 116: 15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Discourses in reference to the event were preached on the same day by Professor Emerson at Andover Theological Seminary, and by several members of the Association with which Mr. Homer had been connected. A few Sabbaths afterward his death was appropriately noticed in the Baptist church at South Berwick. Even then, the lamentation of the audience resembled that which was heard at his funeral. At a still later period, a eulogy was pronounced upon him in the Episcopal chapel near the village where he had labored, and it was still obvious that the fountains of tears had not been dried up. Different notices of his character appeared in several of our religious and political journals, and the grief which is yet felt for his death bears witness to the good impressions of his life. It is the wish of some of his friends that his body had been laid in the burial-ground of his parish, where a broken shaft might rise as an emblem of the life that was so abruptly closed. But perhaps it is meet that he should lie near the baptismal font where he was consecrated to the God of his fathers, and hard by the altar where he devoted himself to the cause for which he died. All this however is of inferior moment; for whether he is to rise encircled by the people of his charge or by the friends of his youth, he will come forth, we trust, clothed in a white robe and with a palm-branch in his hand.

Twenty-four years and less than two months made up the whole period of his life. It has been said, that the very circumstance of his untimely death, may give him a better posthumous influence than he would have exerted if he had outlived the novelty of his ministrations. It was one of his own favorite ideas, that a youthful minister, who leaves a pure memory to be embalmed in the hearts of survivors, can enlist more sympathy for the truth by preaching from the grave,

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than he could have attracted by spending a long life in the pulpit.[1] It may be true that, in some respects, the usefulness of our friend is increased by the fact that his life has been broken off, but in other respects it is lessened. His mind was not a reservoir that had been exhausted, but a fountain that would have continued to flow. It is said that death is gain to him and by his liveliness of sensibility he is well fitted for high enjoyment in heaven. But we never grieve for the dead who die in the Lord; we weep for ourselves only and for our children. It is said that he was ill prepared to endure the jarrings of the church in her militant condition, and perhaps would have turned away in disgust from public life. But time, which modifies all things, would have blunted the keenness of his sensibility, and the pain which he would have received from one source would be more than balanced by the pleasures that would have come in from other sources. From all such topics of consolation we turn away in sickness of heart, and find no repose until we bow down before the Sovereign who has infinite counsels, and all of them infinitely wise. He had reasons for blighting our hopes, and they were such reasons as we are too weak to comprehend. He required perhaps a new ornament for some niche in the temple above, and he took what seemed unto him good. There is no accomplishment of our friend, no treasure of ancient or of modern lore, no aptness for investigation, no refinement of sensibility, no grace of language or of thought, but has already been combined with the essential character of the soul, and will continue to transmit its influence long after tongues have ceased, and knowledge in its earthly form has vanished away. Then let us fall in reverence before that august Being who disappointeth our hopes, and casteth down our high imaginations. In his view the longest life is but one day, and the shortest is a thousand years. He sends us forth on a solemn mission, and be our death sooner or later, we are bound

[1] See his Essay on the Posthumous Power of the Pulpit.

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to leave behind us some memorial of good. Every moment are our hearts "beating their funeral marches to the grave;" but as we go onward we may, if we will, look upward, and believe where we do not know, and hope where we cannot believe, and submit where we dare not hope. The voice from the tomb is, that we be prepared to live so long as we are called to labor, and willing to die when the time of our release shall come; rejoicing to linger on the earth, which is after all so goodly to look upon, and choosing rather to depart and to be present with the Lord.

APPENDIX TO THE MEMOIR.

NOTE A. p. 96.

The following are the plans of the four sermons which Mr. Homer wrote, as parts of a series of discourses on the Divine Attributes. The first two were designed to be introductory to the series.

SERMON I.—OBSTACLES TO OUR PROGRESS IN RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.

2 Tim. 3: 7,—*Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

The object of this sermon is to consider some of the more common obstacles to the acquisition of religious truth. Among these may be specified first, incorrect apprehensions of the kind of evidence by which religious truth is to be established; secondly, an unwillingness to admit that there are mysteries in religion which cannot be explained; thirdly, an unwillingness to look at truth as a symmetrical system; fourthly, a disposition to conduct our inquiries under other influences than those of love to the truth, and reverence for its Author; fifthly, a disposition to study truth speculatively rather than practically.

But after all these obstacles have been overcome, truth is a jewel not easily gained; it is a friend jealous of its claims, sparing of its favors. The greatest discoverer in natural science described himself as

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only collecting the pebbles on an illimitable shore; and the student of God's eternal mind must make a still more humiliating comparison between his own poor attainments and the infinitude of knowledge that lies beyond. Yet, praised be God, if the field is immense, there is an eternity for its cultivation. The sincere inquirer may often cast his eye forward into a new and blessed sphere of discovery, where the studies commenced in weakness and in ignorance here shall be prosecuted with new and unobstructed faculties forever. "Now we see through a glass darkly. Then face to face. Here we know in part, we prophesy in part. There that which is perfect shall come, and that which is in part shall be done away."

SERMON II.—SOURCES OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. Acts 18: 27,—*That they should seek the Lord if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.*

The object of this discourse is to consider the Sources of our Knowledge of God.

The first source mentioned is, our own moral nature. There was fabled to be a mirror in a temple in ancient Arcadia which gave back to him who looked into it, not the reflection of his own face but of the Deity whom he worshipped. Such a mirror is every man's soul. (a) The idea of God is essentially involved in the operations of conscience. (b) The instinctive desires of the soul impel us to believe in the existence and superiority of a God. (c) The sentiments of piety lead most clearly and surely to the knowledge of him who is their great object.

The second source of our knowledge of God is found in his works. The reasoning from effect to cause is here admitted to be valid, but is considered inferior to the reasoning that is founded on our moral nature.

The third source of our knowledge of God is the Bible. This book confirms what the unaided reason discovers, and reveals some truths which otherwise would have remained unknown to us.

SERMON III.—CONTRAST BETWEEN THE POWER OF GOD AND THAT OF MAN. Psalm 62: 11,—*Power belongeth unto God.*

The object of this discourse is to show in what respects the power of God differs in kind, rather than degree, from the power of man.

It does not differ in all respects.—The power of God is no more adequate than that of man to perform things which are in their own na-

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ture impossible.—The power of God, like that of man, does not always work without instruments and means.—It is not chiefly in the ability to perform a miracle that the superiority of divine to human power is manifest; for God exerts greater might in creating a universe and establishing its laws, than in suspending the action of those laws for a season. "Is not the rising of some small seeds," says an old writer, "with a multiplication of their numerous posterity, an effect of as great a power as our Saviour's feeding many thousands with a few loaves by a secret augmentation of them? Is not the chemical producing of so pleasant and delicious a fruit as the grape, from a dry earth and insipid rain and a sour vine, as admirable a token of divine power as our Saviour's turning water into wine?"

But there are particulars in which the power of God differs from that of man essentially, in kind as well as degree. First, it is underived; secondly, it is creative; thirdly, it operates without fatigue; fourthly, it is independent of the relations of space and time; fifthly, it can operate directly and irresistibly upon spirit, as well as matter.

The preceding discussion suggests, first, that the purposes of God can never be thwarted; secondly, that the friendship of so powerful a being is inconceivably desirable; and thirdly, that the resources of wrath possessed by infinite power are the proper objects of awe and fear.

SERMON IV.—ETERNITY OF GOD. Exodus 3: 14,—*And God said unto Moses, I am that I am.*

The object of this discourse is, first, to prove the Eternity of God; secondly, to show the connection between the Divine Eternity and certain other theological truths; and thirdly, to develop the practical lessons which are taught by this attribute.

I. Proof of God's Eternity. This attribute seems indispensable to the perfection of the Being whom we instinctively believe to be the perfect God. But, first, he exists without beginning, for (a) he cannot have created himself, and (b) he cannot have been created by another being, for in that case the being who created him would be the God whose eternity we are attempting to prove. Secondly, God's existence must be without end, for (a) he can have no reason for terminating his own existence, and (b) there can exist no other being who may terminate it, for in that case the being who could destroy would be the more powerful, and therefore the God whose eternity we are considering. Thirdly, the Scriptures declare that God is eternal.

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II. Connection of the truth that God is eternal with certain other theological truths.

First, the Eternity of God is indissolubly connected with his immutability. The doctrine of his immutability is not disproved (a) by the passages of Scripture which describe him as repenting, nor (b) by the fact that he changes his treatment of individuals and nations as their circumstances change, nor (c) by the fact that he is influenced by prayer. Secondly, the Eternity of God as it is revealed in the Scriptures affords ground for an inference that Christ is divine. Thirdly, it reflects light on our own immortality.

III. Practical lessons taught by the doctrine.

First, God is not to be described by any human analogies. We should not reason concerning him as subject to the relations either of time or space. Secondly, we learn from this doctrine a lesson of faith and hope concerning the fulfilment of long delayed promises. Thirdly, it is a terrible thing to sin against the eternal God.

NOTE B, p. 96.

Of Mr. Homer's historical sermons two are contained in the present volume. A third was prepared for publication, but for want of space is not inserted. It is a highly graphic discourse on the Character and Conduct of Balaam. The fourth contains a history of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and was delivered on the morning of the last Sabbath on which he ever preached. It formed part of a double sermon, which was designed to be preparatory to the administration of the sacramental feast. He closed the sermon in the afternoon with the following appeal to those who were soon to leave the sanctuary, while the church were gathering around the table of their Lord. The appeal may be interesting as it contains the last words which Mr. Homer ever wrote for the pulpit, and immediately preceded the last communion service in which he ever engaged on earth.

"Finally, with earnest affection we invite all who are present to tarry with us and view the scene. We deem it a hard thing to bless the congregation, that they may turn their backs upon a feast that is spread for them. Rather would we have them pause and listen to its fond invitation. Guilt-stricken spirit, it has a voice for thee: 'Come to the fountain.' Man of the world grasping after earthly treasures, it has a voice for thee: 'Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.' Bereaved and desolate one, it has a voice for

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thee: 'Come unto me thou heavy laden, and I will give thee rest.' To each and to all it utters its message,—'Come.' Above all to the baptized children of this church, the members of Christ's body, if not the communicants at his table, does it address its urgent entreaty. And as it warns them not to think lightly of the table where parental faith is partaking of the emblems, it seems to utter again that sweet and blessed assurance, 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Oh how happy should we be if the close of our service to-day and each sacramental Sabbath should witness no separation; if there were none here to crave a blessing as they hurry away from the communion of saints. But happier still, if the invitation might be welcomed in its deepest purport, if a few communions more might gather us all close to the table, in happy waiting for the time when our Lord himself shall come.

'Sweet, awful hour! the only sound
One gentle footstep gliding round,
Offering by turns on Jesus' part
The cross to every hand and heart.

Refresh us Lord to hold it fast,
And when thy veil is drawn at last,
Let us depart where shadows cease,
With words of blessing and of peace.'"

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LITERARY ADDRESSES.

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THE first of the following Articles is the Essay on the Posthumous Power of the Pulpit, with which Mr. Homer closed the exercises of his class at the thirty-second Anniversary of Andover Theological Seminary. The second is an Oration on the Dramatic Element in Pulpit Oratory, pronounced before the Porter Rhetorical Society in Andover Theological Institution, on Monday, August 31, 1840. See page 51 of the Memoir. These two Addresses and the Sermons which follow them are arranged, with a single exception, according to the order of time in which they were written.

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LITERARY ADDRESSES.

ESSAY ON THE POSTHUMOUS POWER OF THE PULPIT.[1]

It is one criterion of the value of the human soul, that such a price has been paid for its redemption. It would be a just estimate of the worth of the mind, did we measure it by the toils and sacrifices which in all ages have been endured for its advancement. The principle of vicarious suffering extends beyond that atoning cross which is its chief development. It pervades all history. It connects itself indissolubly with the progress of man. The world is one great altar of sacrifice to which all minds have contributed their offerings. One who stands on the eminences of the present, may look down on the long period of the past and say, The great ones of other ages have toiled for me, and I have en-

[1] Rev. Mr. Aiken, of Boston, in the discourse which is referred to on the 129th page of the Memoir, remarked, "Had Mr. Homer looked into the future with prophetic eye, he could scarcely have uttered sentiments more applicable to his own case, than the following, which fell from his lips on occasion of his leaving the Theological Seminary at their last Anniversary. 'The preacher, who casts his eye far down the lapse of ages into the very bosom of that eternity where time shall almost be forgotten, such a one will make his *life* a *life*, short though it be, and will count its days by *labors* and its years by *fruits*. In the great harvest the question shall be not *how long*, but *how much*. We shall all be there, these venerable laborers from the vineyard, and those who go down to their graves youthful and strong.'"

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tered into their harvest. In me may be centering all the sacrifices and labors ever endured for learning and for truth. I stood by the pile of Polycarp, or studied in the cloister of Augustine, or heard Luther thunder from the old high pulpit, or sat through the second hour-glass of Mather's long discourse, because for me, the martyr and the monk, the reformer and the puritan have lived and labored and died. So impressed were some of the old theologians with this connexion between the present and the past, that they fastened on Adam's posterity an identity with his person and his crime, and crowded the whole family of man into the very garden where they were doomed to sinfulness and to wo.

Prominent among the almoners of this posthumous power is the pulpit. The preacher is laboring for the future, for eternity. Death or the sure current of time often bears him onward to a sphere of action too vast for life. Perhaps he is doomed like all great minds to the misfortune of outstripping the tardy age by a precocious growth. Time will be faithful in bringing round the hour of his recompense, when death shall arrest his progress and allow him to be overtaken and honored by a slow-moving world. Perhaps he toils in a sphere of slender opportunities. Death will disentangle the spirit from time and space, the present barriers of its influence, and make it cross oceans, and it may be pervade the earth. Perhaps he is cut off from the midst of brilliant and successful exertion. Death by its startling suddenness will so quicken his power, that it shall surpass the living voice. Milton was reviled by his contemporaries as a "black mouthed Zoilus," "a profane and lascivious poetaster;" but how soon did posterity gather around his bier, and the tribute to the despised dreamer became the worship of a prophet indeed. The classical and learned discourses of Jeremy Taylor may have been lost to the servants and children of Lord Carberry to whom they were first preached. But the light then kindled at Golden Grove, among the peasantry of Wales, was

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destined to be one of the altar fires of the British pulpit, and for ages to come the treasures collected for that young and illiterate audience shall be the wealth of scholars. There are some present who mourned the premature extinction of that graceful luminary which shed its mild light on the churches of our neighboring city, in the hour of their darkness and peril. But how much more may have been accomplished by the spirit of the youthful Huntington, moving amid those churches in the quickened memory of his few first fruits, than if he had lived till now, and had come up here to-day, with white head and venerable mien to receive our homage. And through the whole history of the past, how much more may such minds have accomplished by this invisible transmigration of their power, than if they had continued until now to animate their mortal frames, walking among men with all the hindrances of direct communion, and pent up within the close walls of an earthly tabernacle. How wise is that Providence by which the world is not left to stand still and grow old, but age follows age and generation comes to the relief of generation in bearing on the gathered resources of the past, and we of the present enter into our work like those Spanish princes who lived and reveled and reigned in the cemeteries of their ancestors and over their very dust.

The preacher must be sensible through his whole ministry of his own fellowship with the past. In his study he is surrounded by a host of these invisible spirits, not merely as they stand embedded in parchment within his library, but as with real presence they touch the chords of feeling, or move the springs of intellect, or guide the glowing pen. In the pulpit they stand by his side to animate his action or to point his language, and sometimes they whisper the words of ancient piety after its spirit is gone. "The common-places of prayers and of sermons," suggests a late eccentric writer, "are each the select expression of some stricken or jubilant soul,

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but now, like the zodiac of Denderah and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, they do but mark the height to which the waters once rose." Should some old puritan be summoned from his grave to visit the churches that have swerved most from his fondly-cherished standards, he might wonder to find a worship so goodly amid the very ruins of his faith; where filial affection has graved on the memory and stereotyped in the usage the phrases that are orthodox and old.

The people also as well as their spiritual teachers, feel the posthumous power of the pulpit. In that great analysis which shall one day be made of the world's history, the influence of the pastor will stand forth as one chief element which has formed and modified society. The elevation of his office, the dignity of his pursuits, the solemn scenes where he mingles with men, all combine to invest his person with a mystery which throws far and wide a hallowing influence. When he dies, the remembrances of his example and counsel are often gathered as the relics of a master spirit, and the word that dropped from his lips almost unconsciously and long ago, will be living and working when the voice is hushed. There is a beautiful village of New England from which Whitefield was driven with such rancorous abuse, that he shook off the dust of his feet and proclaimed that the Spirit of God should not visit that spot, till the last of those persecutors was dead. The good man's curse had a fearful power in it, though he was not divinely armed with the prophet's sword. A consciousness of desertion paralyzed the energies of that church; for nearly a century it was nurtured on the unwholesome food of a strange doctrine, in the very garden of natural loveliness it sat like a heath in the desert upon which there could be no rain, and not till that whole generation had passed from the earth did Zion appear there in her beauty and strength.

It is the sentiment of an American theologian, one who

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has himself lived to be spoken of and admired as other men are after death, "Preach for posterity." It cannot be denied that some preachers live too exclusively in the future. Their plans are for prospective rather than for immediate usefulness. They elaborate for after ages, and depend too little upon the living voice, and the glorious consciousness of doing *now*. They stop to dry up the fluids of present vitality, that they may embalm themselves as mummies for posterity. Yet while the preacher should strive chiefly to act in the living present, he should often draw his bow at a venture, and with unwonted tension, that it may reach within the veil of the great hereafter. The sermons that have cost days and nights of mental wrestling are those that will speak with deep-voiced power to the future. Though they pass by like a forgotten dream, the day shall come when those great elements of thought they suggest, shall be summoned to their work. They will live and act in those periods of mental exigency, when the memories of the past hear a resurrection trumpet, and come forth from their graves. That preacher who would be immortal, must turn off occasionally from the efforts which sweep over the people the waves of temporary excitement, and brace himself for those cool researches and those mighty labors which strike so deep that not a ripple is seen on the surface.

The preacher who would be felt and acknowledged after death should cultivate individuality of influence. The men who are remembered as leaders and formers of mind have stood out with personal distinctness among the mass, and have had a character of their own to stamp upon the world. And the preacher should see to it that his own idiosyncrasy be prominent amid the elements which he must derive from without. He should cultivate that portion which God and nature have assigned to him, not burying his identity under the garb of a servile imitation, but ever striving to be *him-*

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self. If he be but the patchwork from admired models, he covers over the image which his Creator enstamped upon him, and posterity will never distinguish his features in the indiscriminate mass. He becomes but a new channel for fountains that have long been open, instead of sending forth from the depths of his own original nature a full current of good influences to mankind.

It becomes the preacher to watch also with sedulous jealousy the moral and religious impressions which he leaves upon others. "If a minister," says Dr. Scott, "go to the verge of a precipice, his people will be sure to go over." The corrupt doctrine, the impure example will be working its silent work, long after the hand that started it has crumbled into dust. There is a certain disease which seems to stay its progress after it has destroyed the life of its victims, so that those who look into their coffins for months after they are buried will find the dead in the freshness of their first entombment. Sometimes a whole family will follow each other with strange rapidity into the embraces of this wasting foe, and there is a vulgar but terrible tradition, that the dead sustain the appearance of vitality by preying upon the life of surviving friends. The dead one comes in to touch with skinny fingers the food they eat, to taint with corrupted lungs the air they breathe, to press them in a close embrace, till they are won to his own ghastly fellowship. And just such is the power of a diseased influence from the pulpit. It must live long after the preacher is dead. It must stalk with fearful contagion through the paths of his corrupting walk. It must brood as with raven-wing over the altar where he proclaimed his pestilent doctrines. It must gather its victims from the lambs of his own flock, and poison the famished ones that cried at his table for food. Sometimes it may fix its viper-fangs in the very heart of the community and reduce the whole region to the loathsomeness of death.

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Finally, the preacher should cultivate a habit of living above, and independently of the bondage of time, or death. "We cannot deceive God and nature," says an old writer, "for a coffin is a coffin, though it be covered with a pompous veil; and the minutes of our time strike on, and are counted by angels, till the period comes, which must give warning to all the neighbors that thou art dead. And if our death can be put off a little longer, what advantage can it be in the accounts of nature and felicity. They that three thousand years agone died unwillingly, and stopped death two days or staid it a week—what is their gain—where is that week?" And the preacher who casts his eye far down the lapse of years, into the very bosom of that eternity where time shall almost be forgotten—such a one will make his life *a life*, short though it be, and will count its days by *labors*, and its years by *fruits*. In that great harvest, the question asked shall be, not *how long*, but *how much*. We shall all be there—these venerable laborers from the vineyard, and those who go down to their graves youthful and strong. The differences of age and station shall then be forgotten, when each shall have placed in his hand and before his eye that golden chain which connects him with the whole brotherhood of being. And there shall be the long line of our spiritual descendants, like jewels that pave the eternal vista. Though they stand not by our death-beds, like those old philosophers, to inhale our spirits, we shall feel our own warm breath coming back upon us, and shall discern our own lineaments as in a mirror. Though they seek not in the spirit of that ancient affection, to place their burial-urns close to ours, or to mingle their ashes with our own, long before deposited, they shall come at last to lie down with us in our joy or our woe.

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THE DRAMATIC ELEMENT IN PULPIT ORATORY.

The earliest modern attempt to make the Drama a vehicle of spiritual instruction was rather amusing than successful. As was its origin in classic Greece, so was its revival in catholic Europe most intimately connected with religion. The monks of the dark ages, unable to render attractive the simple truths of the bible, endeavored to set forth its events and doctrines by scenic representation. But the stupidity of both teacher and pupil made way for barbarous anachronisms in these sacred mysteries. The motley stage-group would at one time bring together in strange commingling, the Saviour of the world, the ass of Balaam, and the poet Virgil talking in rhyme. Another catastrophe would present the figures of our first parents arrayed with the implements of modern industry—Adam with spade and plough, and his frail consort at her spinning-wheel. "I have myself," says Coleridge, "a piece of this kind on the education of Eve's children, in which after the fall and repentance of Adam, the offended Maker condescends to visit them and to catechize the children, who with a noble contempt of chronology are all brought together from Adam to Noah. The *good* children say the ten commandments, the apostle's creed, and the Lord's prayer, but Cain after he had received a box on the ear for not taking off his hat, and afterward offering his left hand, is tempted by the devil so to blunder in the Lord's prayer as to reverse the petition and say it backward."

And yet there is a dramatic exhibition of truth very different from the measured tread of the buskin, or the flummery of modern theatricals. The stage has become so corrupt that it has degraded the very taste and spirit on which it is founded. We speak of the dramatic element such as it ex-

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ists in true naturalness and dignity within the soul of man, and such as even Inspiration has employed to arouse attention to its solemn themes. The Old Testament contains whole books, which are eminently dramatic both in their structure and style. The exquisite poetry of Solomon's Song takes the form of almost constant dialogue between the various individuals of the nuptial group, while the company of virgins, as the scholar cannot fail to notice, is like the chorus of the Grecian Tragedy. The poem of Job, not alone in the distinctness of its characters, but in the varied interest of its scenes and the deep and startling power of its descriptions, may lay claim to the dramatic sisterhood. Even David often combines the drama with the ode, and we lose the charm of some of his richest melodies, unless we hear separate and responsive voices, sometimes from a single companion in music and praise, sometimes from the assembled chorus of Israel, again from the ever-eloquent depths of nature, and now deep and solemn from the bosom of God.

Yet it is the dramatic spirit rather than the dramatic form that we chiefly notice in scripture. It is that intense, vivid and picture-like expression, into which the poetry of the bible in its flashes of excitement so often rises. Such are those sudden changes of person throughout the Psalms, where the narrator becomes at once the actor, and throws down the harp to take up the sword and shield. Such is the sombre procession of ghosts that Isaiah summons to meet the king of Babylon. Ushered in by the exulting fir-trees and cedars of Lebanon, they come to utter taunts over his unburied corse, to sound the noise of viols in his ears, and to spread over him his wormy coverlid. The prophets in fact are pervaded throughout by this dramatic spirit. We hear in them the voices of busy multitudes, and the din of bustling action. They hurry us across a stage hung with every form of scenery, fields waving with harvests, or bristling with spears—nations charioted and crowned in triumph, or sitting in sack-

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cloth, solitary. In our ears are the shouting for the summer-fruits, or the trumpeted alarm from the mountains, or the doleful creatures howling over the ruins of ancient splendor, and sometimes sweet strains of the orchestral music of heaven.

Nor in the more didactic dispensation of the New Testament are we entirely destitute of the same rhetorical feature. It is true, the inspired fishermen tell their story with few of the graces of style, and but little vividness of emotion. Luke, the most accomplished historian, has a severe classical taste which confines him to the simple language of narrative and the chasteness of Greek models. Paul, though he occasionally introduces the forms of *logical* dialogue, would seem to have studied in the school of Demosthenes rather than that of Aeschylus. But where can be found a richer variety of the dramatic style in its simple elements, than in the parables and discourses of our Saviour, crowded as they are with beauty and tenderness and solemn sublimity, and appealing to the soul of man from its sympathy with life and action. And how full of the loftiest dramatic life is the vision unfolded at Patmos, where the spirit of Hebrew Poetry looks out at the eye of the last of the prophets, and

> "gorgeous tragedy,
> In sceptred pall, comes sweeping by."

With what a magic hand are we hurried through the three great acts of this sublime yet mysterious drama—to watch the shifting scenes in seals and vials and trumpets—each movement of the grand plot amid thunderings and earthquakes —till time deepens into eternity, and the toiling church on earth becomes the praising church in heaven.

With these inspired models, and with subjects so fitted to foster the dramatic spirit, it seems natural that the preacher should exhibit something of this element in his discourses. The most eloquent pulpit-orators have often availed them-

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selves of the dramatic *form* with no little effect. It may be observed in those changes of scene and of character, by which the monotony of the didactic discourse is relieved, and its truths stand out like life. Particularly do the historical themes of the bible furnish scope for this peculiar style. A sermon founded upon a scene or character in sacred history, may be in one sense a perfect drama, constructed in close accordance with the most classic models. The preacher may trace the progress of the story with a vividness surpassing pictured and shifting scenery. He may present the varied characters, with an individuality of delineation, more striking than if they stood forth in person upon the stage. He may act out the catastrophe in glowing language, and lifesome gesture, as if himself were living over again the scene he depicts. He may intersperse the whole with homiletic preludes and interludes, like the chantings of a moral chorus, amid the stir of tragedy. Or without attempting this prolonged exhibition of dramatic skill, he may, like Whitefield, mingle this form with his occasional discourses—varying the sameness of direct address by alternate scenes of terror or of joy—causing the past and the future to come home like the living present to the soul, and making the pulpit speak forth with the varied tongues of angels and men. But for this dramatic form in the pulpit rare powers are requisite. It demands an ability to distinguish and depict the nicer shades of character, or it is the form without the power and life. It should be characterized by true dignity of moral picturing, or it becomes the false glare of histrionic tinsel. It should be pervaded by spiritual unction, or it degenerates to buffoonery and farce.

But it is the dramatic *spirit* which may be most successfully and generally cultivated in pulpit oratory. As the form of dialogue may exist without its impression of vividness and force, so the dramatic spirit may pervade the sermon, and warm and animate the style, where there is no formal succession of scenes and persons. It is this characteristic which

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is most opposed to the barren and deadening influence of abstract theology—theology which has made the men described, and the men addressed from the pulpit, like statues lifeless and cold. The dramatic spirit in all its dealings with men, will turn away from the stiff specimen picture hung up in the garret, and in the open air will draw from the breathing figures of nature. And not content with re-creating the men that had been turned to stones, the dramatic preacher will invade the very domain of this granite Circe, to transform its stones to men. Under his Ithuriel touch abstraction becomes being. The words dealed out to the people are truths passed through the fire of life. Ideas stand forth with the breathing force of objective realities. The lines of his own experience blaze around his thoughts, and he speaks with the energy of one who reads his doctrine in the clear pages of history, or the burning revelations of prophecy—with a cloud of witnesses from the past and the future, gathering near to confirm with trumpet-tone the sentence. He presents truth as it breathes in the stirring scenes of every day life, or as it speaks in some new, yet lifelike group which the imagination may call up. He is so familiar with men that he seems to dwell within the temple of their very consciousness. Does he draw from that store-house of scenery and character, the bible, he seems to live over again the David, and the Paul, and the Jesus. To him, Christianity is one walking among men, with his form erect and his eye on heaven, and Judgment is the hurrying of the very audience to whom he speaks, pale and trembling, before the bar of the great assize. When he touches upon sin, it instantly leaves the vague abstraction of depravity, and assumes a concrete and palpable form. It is *one* sin selected with penetrating eye from the long black catalogue. It is the very one that he has wrestled with and wept over in his own closet, or traced with keen sagacity in the hearts of others. It stands out as no cold hypothesis, but a stern reality. The subject of his discourse is the criminal himself

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rather than the crime. He unveils the seclusion of the sinner, he brings to view his parleys with conscience, his dallyings with temptation, he traces his downward progress from step to step, for a moment he follows him back in his weak and hesitating relapse toward virtue, till again the ground crumbles beneath his feet, and the solemn dramatist suspends him over the brink. The hearer goes away and says—a *man* has spoken to us—he has spoken *to me*.

No writer possesses more of this dramatic skill than that Shakspeare of theology, John Bunyan. It has been justly observed, that while other dramatists make their men personifications of moral qualities, he turns the abstract qualities into men. What Mr. Honest said of himself, will apply to all the characters of the Pilgrims' Progress—"so the old gentleman blushed and said, not Honesty in the abstract, but Honest is my name." And this is the secret of Bunyan's power over us in childhood. "*All* the world is a stage," but the young heart is most full of dramatic life and action, and that author speaks to its condition and kindles its love, who clothes upon the ideal, and peoples it with familiar forms. The Christian's conflicts and joys have a power over those fresh and buoyant feelings, which the sternest tragedy cannot surpass. With unwearied interest we follow the Pilgrim from "the slough of despond from which he could not get out by reason of the burden that was upon his back," to the river of death where Hope says to him, "Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom and it is good." There is not a brave picture in the interpreter's house, or a goodly prospect from the delectable mountains, before which we do not pause and admire. In our imagination we affix to each character its appropriate features, and our idea of Mr. Feeble-mind, Mr. By-ends and Mr. Great-heart "who was not afraid of the lions," will be as distinct and definite as if they were our own traveling companions. So perfect is this dramatic power that we become ourselves in sympathy the actors, and

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experience as we read along every alternation of feeling. We ourselves shudder at the hideous pit-falls, or turn pale in the giant's dungeon, or tug up the hill of difficulty, or "awake to sing in the chamber whose name is peace." We ourselves step forward with shoulders pressed back, and glances of defiance at those who bar up our pathway, and say with a stout voice to the man with the inkhorn, "Set down my name, sir;" and it seems as if our own souls were ravished at "the pleasant voices from those within, even those that walk on the top of the palace." How Bunyan may have employed this element in his preaching will appear from a homely passage, which, though a specimen of the lower kind of dramatic power, is singularly adapted to bring home the stern realities of truth to an illiterate audience. "They that will have heaven," he says, "must run for it, because the devil, the law, sin, death and hell follow them. There is never a poor soul that is going to heaven, but the devil, the law, sin, death and hell make after that soul. And I will assure you the devil is nimble, he can run apace, he is light of foot; he hath overtaken many; he hath turned up their heels, and hath given them an everlasting fall. Also the law; that can shoot a great way; have a care that thou keep out of the reach of those great guns, the ten commandments. Hell also hath a wide mouth, and can stretch itself farther than you are aware of. If this were well considered, then thou, as well as I, wouldst say, they that will have heaven must run for it."

The French pulpit has perhaps been more distinguished for the dramatic style of its discourses than any other. But it is too often the glitter of theatrical show, and the aim after stage-effect that is exhibited by the preachers of that gay people, rather than the natural out-flowing of vivid and life-like emotion. Among the old divines of England, Jeremy Taylor has most availed himself of the dramatic element, occasionally in prolonged passages of tragic grandeur, again in

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the graphic lifesomeness of those comparisons in which all nature seems endowed with speech, and chiefly in that personal and individual power with which he depicts and reproaches sin. "That soul that cries to those rocks to cover her, if it had not been for thy perpetual temptations, might have followed the Lamb in a white robe: and that poor man that is clothed with shame and flames of fire would have shined in glory, but thou didst force him to be partner of thy baseness."

Among the metaphysical divines of New England, that admirable theologian, Dr. Bellamy, was particularly distinguished for the same element. We may see some traces of it in the fourth of his profound and eloquent discourses on "the wisdom of God in the permission of sin," where in his own beautiful language, "patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and angels, mixed in the same assembly, all join to carry on the conversation, each filled with holy delight, while the ways of God to man, and the ways of man to God, are all the theme." But it was chiefly in his extemporaneous efforts, under circumstances calculated to excite and enliven, that his noble frame and sonorous voice seemed to kindle with the inspiration of his soul. The following graphic account of the style and manner of Bellamy is from the pen of an eye-witness, and may be valuable as illustrating the mode in which the sternest theology may be dramatized. "While I was an undergraduate at New Haven," says the historian Trumbull, "The Dr. preached a lecture for Mr. Bird. At the time appointed there was a full house. The Dr. prayed and sang, then rose before a great assembly apparently full of expectation, and read for his text—'Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of the law to do them.' The number and appearance of the people animated the preacher, and he instantly presented them with a view of the twelve tribes of Israel assembled on Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim, and the audience were made to hear the Levites distinctly reading the curses, and all the

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thousands of Jacob repeating them, uttering aloud their approving Amen. Twelve times, says the Dr., it goes round, round, round all the camp of Israel. Cursed be the man who committeth this or the other iniquity. Nay round it goes through all the thousands of God's chosen people— "Cursed is he that confirmeth not all the words of the law *to do them;* and all the people shall say amen." Having from a variety of views established the leading point, that every sin deserves eternal death, that he may treat all parties fairly, he brought the objector upon the stage to remonstrate against the doctrine he had advanced. Then Gabriel was brought down to show the futility of these objections, and the impious presumption of making them against the divine law and government. They were clearly answered, and the opponent was triumphantly swept from the stage. The argument gained strength and beauty through the whole progress." It seemed as if so many new witnesses were summoned for the truth. The stern doctrines of the gospel assumed a lifesomeness and a plausibility, which they could not possess in the coldness of abstract detail, and to each sinner there seemed to come a voice pronouncing upon *him* the fearful doom and demanding his approving amen.

There is a familiar passage in one of the sermons of Tholuck, which is perhaps the best specimen to be found in any language of the higher dramatic power. It is designed to illustrate the danger of delay in religion, and we are hurried from one scene to another with a rapidity which is equaled only by the vividness with which each individual picture is presented. First, we stand by a burning house, and we follow the distracted parent as he hurries back for the missing one, only to hear the words, "*Too late,*" from the tumbling walls. Instantly it is night about us, and we hear the tramp of a courser, as the wanderer flies homeward for a dying father's blessing. "*Too late*" is the shriek that pierces his soul as he reaches the dwelling of death. Again the scene is changed.

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We stand by a scaffold. The victim, the executioner, the implements of death, and the shivering multitude are around us. Suddenly and far off on the distant hill, there are signs of joy. A low murmur begins at the verge of the crowd, and like a wave of sound seems speedily to pervade the whole mass of being. Pardon—*Pardon*—PARDON—but not till the guilty head has fallen. "Yea," says the preacher, "since the earth has stood, the heart of many a man has been fearfully pierced through by the cutting words—*Too late.* But oh, who will describe the lamentation that shall arise, when at the boundary line which parts time from eternity, the voice of the righteous judge will cry—*Too late.* Long have the wide gates of heaven stood open, and its messengers have cried, To-day, to-day if ye will hear his voice. Man, man, how then will it be with you, when once those gates with appalling sound shall be shut for eternity."

GENTLEMEN OF THE PORTER RHETORICAL SOCIETY,

On former occasions like the present, you have had presented from this chair, the rules and principles of christian action. We have chosen to leave behind as our legacy, a branch of that great science which our association is designed to cultivate, persuaded that we should become better preachers if we analyzed more closely the characteristics of pulpit-power, and caught the spirit of its illustrious models. Brethren, let these be our parting counsels. Walk among men, as those who receive impressions of *life*, which will linger about you in the closet and study. Read truth in the kindling eye, and the elastic step of your brother. Let it speak out in the scenes of your personal history, and the breathing pictures of the world you live in. Talk with your own souls as a familiar friend, and listen like David Brainerd to "the various powers and affections of the mind, alternately whispering" their part in the great drama of your inward life.

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Commune with men, not the men of a single idea, or the creatures of some one profession, but those who have the world crowded into their souls, and life speaking through their language. Cultivate an acquaintance with the great past, whether it open to you the cave of the 'golden-mouthed' at Antioch, or ride over the prophet's battle-field at Mecca, or come swelling up in organ-tones from the English cathedral. Study philosophically that myriad-minded man, the great dramatist. Learn theology whether it burns on the brow of Lear, or laughs under the coxcomb of his fool. Behold your own system of belief, that in which you were baptized in infancy, which you professed before angels in manhood, which you hope to preach to old age, behold it speaking out in the unconscious developments of genius, and value it none the less that it comes not from a catechism, but from a play. Chiefly imbibe the dramatic spirit of the bible, and dwell on its great eternal themes till your own souls are won to a true fellowship. Above all, be yourselves men, not a monk peeping out upon the world through the dim lattice of a cloister; not an owl dismal and sullen in the sunshine of existence. Be a man—acting, loving, living, with a sympathy for souls weighing upon your hearts, beaming from your eyes, burning in your speech. So may you hope to obtain what a great orator has called, "not eloquence merely, but action, noble, sublime, godlike action."

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SERMONS.

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SERMON I.

INFLUENCE OF FAMILIARITY WITH RELIGIOUS TRUTH UPON THE SINNER.

A PROPHET IS NOT WITHOUT HONOR, SAVE IN HIS OWN COUNTRY, AND IN HIS OWN HOUSE.—Matthew 13: 57.

THAT must have been an impressive scene, when Jesus first stood up to teach in the synagogue of his native city. Nearly a year before, he had left his kindred to go up to Jerusalem. During that absence, he had received the seal of water from the hand of the Baptist, and witnessed the descent of the Heavenly Dove with its voice of confirmation. He had met Satan in the wilderness, and achieved a victory never before accomplished by man. In the spirit and power of a prophet, he had purged the temple at Jerusalem of its impurities. He had journeyed through Samaria dispensing his miraculous favors, and by his wisdom and his eloquence bringing multitudes to the truth. Allured by those social attachments to which his heart was by no means a stranger, he comes back to revisit the scenes of his childhood. He had left them a poor man's son; he returns in the power of the Holy Ghost. Pale and worn with his spiritual conflicts, yet animated by the success of his past labors, and enthusiastic in the consciousness of his divine mission, "he stands up in the synagogue for to read." "And the eyes of all them that were in the house were fastened on him." What now was

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the question with which this impressive silence was broken? What could they say to rid themselves of the impression of his short but thrilling discourse? "Is not this Joseph's son?" And supposing that there was arrogance in his pretensions, they thrust him out of the city.

After a career of successful benevolence, he appears a second time in the neighborhood of his early home. Again the truth of his sayings is pressed upon their hearts and consciences. Again they take refuge from its power by pointing to his former occupation, and to his brothers and sisters who were all with them. Again the Saviour of mankind is constrained to crucify the sympathies of his humanity, and turns his back on the friends of his childhood with the sentiment of the text, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house."

What was the chief circumstance which contributed to this rejection? No doubt the envy of an equal, or the contempt of an inferior may have had part in it; but chiefly it was their familiarity with the person of the prophet. Had a stranger appeared to them with these high pretensions, even though his garb had been humble and his mien lowly, he could not have been *so* contemned. No doubt the multitude would have turned scornfully away from the meek one; but, who can doubt that some expectant mother or daughter in Israel, some veteran waiting for the promises, would have hailed him as the Messiah? But now, not one comes forward to receive his benediction, or to bid him God speed in his glorious enterprise. He was too well known to receive the honor that he merited.

Other illustrations of the principle of the text are of constant occurrence. There is hardly a period in history, or a family that does not testify to its truth;—be it the discoverer of a new continent, compelled to seek patronage from a foreign court, or the child of genius, nowhere less flattered and less honored than beneath his father's roof. The voice

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of the preacher, that is as music to the ears of a stranger, falls unheeded upon the slumberers of his own flock; and he whom great men revere as an oracle shall find many a familiar to doubt, and to scoff at his counsels. The wonders of nature also are nowhere so little revered as among those who were born and nurtured under their very shadow. Who thinks of pausing to wonder at the precipice which hung over his cradle in infancy, or at the cataract whose thunder was the music of his boyhood? How many live indifferent and careless amid natural splendors that multitudes are compassing sea and land to behold! Even truth itself—how valueless does it often become to those who have drawn it in with their earliest being! And it sometimes seems, as if Jesus Christ coming to visit this land of his peculiar residence, this land where he has made himself most familiar in the ordinances of his gospel and in the blessings of his grace, comes to find that the Son of Man is most despised "in the house of his friends." It seems as if his Holy Spirit, driven away by our coldness and indifference, is now seeking some less enlightened regions for his abode; and we hear the sad lament as he departs from us,—"Verily a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house."

Let me invite your attention then to an illustration of this principle: Familiarity with religious truths sometimes tends to make men insensible of their value and their power. And I shall endeavor to point out some important truths, which, from the very frequency and clearness with which they are revealed to us, we are prone to pass by with coldness and neglect. There is indeed in many minds a pride of scepticism which revolts at a truth so plain that the way-faring man may comprehend it, and if they cannot find new avenues of evidence, they prefer to show their superiority by adopting error. But it is not my purpose at the present time to expose this arrogant unbelief, so much as the indifference with which many who believe are prone to regard the truth.

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I. The effect of familiarity is illustrated in respect to the existence and providence of God.

The evidence for these glorious doctrines is written everywhere. We see it in glowing characters upon the universe about us, and the universe within us. We read it in the multiplied and variegated lessons of external nature, and on the clear and lucid pages of our own consciousness. Every man has his own system of natural theology, but with how many is it a matter of scientific rather than of experimental interest. How few are there who carry about with them a habit of realizing the Deity they can so easily reason out in their closets, and whose whole lives are one constant and glowing treatise on the reality of a God. Every man by the aid of an anatomist can analyze the mechanism of the human eye, or the human hand, and study out the marks of a wise and supreme contriver; but who thinks of this contriver as picturing each gratification for the sight, or regulating each motion of the limb? And how many thousand times a day we use each faculty, and never think of the goodness or the greatness of our Father! Every one can admire the sun by day and the stars by night, or meditate on the uniformity of nature, and the beneficent arrangements everywhere made for the comfort and happiness of God's creatures. But who thinks the more of God that the sun rises with regularity on each succeeding day, or that the seasons come round in their turn bringing their varied blessings. My brethren, we are good theologians in the closet and the study, and over the speculations of some profound philosopher; but when we go forth to breathe the fresh air and gaze upon the green hills, though the truth is just as real and just as beautiful in nature as it is in books, we are prone to lay by the student; and we fail to look upward. The very multitude of evidence which surrounds us, the very frequency and uniformity of the blessings we receive, render us forgetful of Him who teaches the lesson and bestows the gift. We have been drinking in this light,

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we have been nourished by this bounty, from the first dawn of our being. To us Jehovah is indeed "dark with excessive bright," veiled behind the richness and multiplicity of his own favors. We are not like those who have been groping for ages in darkness or in blindness, and to whom suddenly the sun appears shining in his strength, or to whose cleared vision are revealed at once the beauties of earth and sky. We were not placed in the midst of the universe as Adam was, with full maturity of powers. The idea of God does not force itself upon us as it did upon him with instantaneous, delightful, irresistible power. We have the same daylight of evidence but it has come gradually upon us, and our long familiarity has made us personally indifferent. "But if we entered the world with the same reason which we carry with us to an opera the first time that we enter a theatre, and if the curtain of the universe were to be rapidly drawn up, struck with the grandeur of everything which we saw, and all the obvious contrivances exhibited, we should not" as even a French atheist has confessed, "be capable of refusing our homage to the eternal power which had prepared for us such a spectacle. But who thinks of marveling at what he has seen for fifty years? What multitudes are there who wholly occupied with the care of obtaining subsistence, have no time for speculation; the rise of the sun is only that which calls them to toil, and the finest night in all its softness is mute to them, or tells them only that it is the hour for repose."

II. The same principle is illustrated in respect to our familiarity with the character of Jesus Christ.

It is a most perfect and delightful embodying of all that is great and good, which is furnished to us in the author of the New Testament dispensation. It commends itself to our highest moral tastes. The world in the brightest periods of its history has produced nothing like it. The dispensation of the law with its sword of terror affrighted none into such perfect obedience. Philosophy in all its strugglings after ideal

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virtue never gave birth even to a conception so pure as this. But now it comes to us not as a bare conception; for the mind of man could never have originated such an idea, and the wants of man demanded the personality of flesh and blood. It is the Deity himself, no longer retiring from the gaze of men, and veiling himself in the mystery of his own invisible and spiritual nature; no longer making himself known only by distant and terrible symbols—the flaming sword, the quaking mountain, and the voice of terror—but coming down to commune with men as a brother, to add to the joy of the social circle by his friendly smile, and to sooth the sorrow of bereavement by weeping at the grave of their loved ones. It is the mystery of God manifest in the flesh, attracting the soul by its incomprehensible nature, and coming home to its affections as a provision for its greatest wants. But, my friends, how is it with us? Do we commune constantly and intimately with this fraternal guide? Do we repair for sympathy and aid to this affectionate physician? Is the presence of Jesus the delight of our souls, and do we find our own characters conforming themselves to his perfect pattern and growing into its likeness? Ah! to how many of us he comes like an old familiar friend, the companion of our childhood, ever by our side, yet remembered and loved and longed for, only when his assiduities cease and his visage is torn from us forever. At how many of our hearts has he been a long time applying for admittance, and we, strange beings that we are, are so familiar with his love and patience and forbearance that we put him off to a more convenient season. The first lessons we read are the story of his life; but the manger and the garden and the cross are words that have lost their significance to us, and fall upon the ear like threadbare tales. We read of his untiring labors, and they awaken no tribute of admiration. We read of the scoffings and contempt, the agony and the blood, and they raise no grief. We are daily reaping the benefits of his influence, in the improvement of society and the

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advance of truth, but we seldom think of tracing back these moral blessings to his instructions, and to the new development of the great law of love in his example as well as his precept. We have been living so long in the noonday of the christian revelation, that we think not of the darkness which was chased away by its sunrise, and we are so satisfied with the light without, that we take no heed that the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts. Could some one of those ancient sages who groped in the night of heathenism, yet panted for a purer illumination—could some Socrates have caught but a glimpse of the approaching morning, with what joy would he have hailed it. How humbly would he have sat at the feet of the dimly revealed Teacher. With what freshness and subduing power would the first obscure hints of the truth as it is in Jesus have come home to his soul. What a bright image of the Great Master would he have exhibited in his conduct, what an untiring devotion in his life. With him the sentiment, for me to live is Christ, would have been no cold and forced duty, but a living and fondly cherished principle; and the cross which we bear so sluggishly through gardens of ease, would have been a luxury to him even up the mountain where his Lord was crucified.

III. The effect of familiarity is further illustrated in respect to the atonement by the blood of the Redeemer.

There is a pathos and a power in those words, redemption by the blood of Jesus, which are lost by our frequent and heartless repetition. They reveal a mystery which even "the angels have desired to look into;" but from which we turn coldly and listlessly away. They come home to the human bosom in its want, and its wretchedness, with a directness and a power which they seldom have to us who have always had that light to keep us from despair; and because we have never despaired, we fail to do homage to the cross. The case of a poor heathen in India will illustrate somewhat the native power and adaptation of this doctrine. He had been a sinner,

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and as all mankind are sometimes conscious of guilt, he felt wretched for his sin. There was a load on his spirit, when something said to him, there must be blood to wash the stain away. He found this truth proclaimed in the religious system in which he had been educated, and there was a response in his moral nature to the fitness of the doctrine, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." He thought he would make a sacrifice of *himself*, and he pierced his sandals with sharp iron nails, and walked for miles with the blood streaming from his feet. Still the burden tarried on his soul. There was no remission by *that* blood. The load of guilt pressed as heavily as before. There was a void somewhere, he knew not exactly what; but he wanted something like a hand leading him up to the Great Spirit whom he had offended—an avenue that he saw not now between the sin-offering and heaven. Faint and exhausted by his penance he drew near to a group who had gathered round a missionary from some christian land. He was too weak and too wretched to notice much that was going on; but suddenly the words of the speaker arrested his attention—"The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin." He paused and leaned upon his staff. His face lighted up with animation. The great demand of his soul was met. "This is just what I want, just what I want," he cried, and threw away his implements of self-torture, and laid down with cheerful alacrity his burden at the cross. But to us, my brethren, this truth comes not after we have exhausted ourselves in the search for peace. To us this Saviour comes not to pluck out the sword with which we have pierced our own bodies. And we have been so long acquainted with the plan of salvation that we do not sympathize with the strong emotion of an apostle when he exclaims, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"

Not many years ago, in a destitute portion of our own land, there lived a man sunk almost to the degradation of heathenism. In early life he had lived within the sound of the gospel,

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and heard something of its edifying doctrines, but they had quite faded from his memory. A long life spent in brutalizing ignorance and enervating dissipation, and among those who if they knew, never spoke to him, of Jesus, had completely eradicated every religious impression from his mind. He passed years groveling in this spiritual stupidity, without one thought of God. One day as he was at work in his field, suddenly and mysteriously, by one of those unaccountable processes by which the Holy Spirit urges conviction upon the soul, the thought rushed upon him, I am a sinner, and a sinner against God. He tried to banish it, but it staid there still. He left his work, and sat down to give himself up to the overpowering emotion. Every moment the picture grew deeper and blacker on the eye of his soul. The acts of his past life came rushing in one after one, with fearful rapidity, till the events of years were concentrated into a moment, and that moment one of intense and burning consciousness of guilt. He went home, but the conviction followed him there. At first the single idea of sin was so intense that it excluded every other thought, even its eternal consequences. By and by the fear and expectation of punishment took possession of his soul. Distracted with the sense of his own pollution, haunted by the angry eye of God, bowed down with a foreboding of some dreadful avenging stroke, he wandered about not knowing whither to repair for relief. The dim light of his early education did not shine upon him with its former vividness. No bible was near to teach him of the way of salvation. At length in part exhausted by the over-working of his nature, in part yielding to his new views of truth, he settled down into something like submission to the will of God. He had become a changed man; he communed with his Maker; he was animated by high purposes of action. Yet still he felt no peace. He looked upon himself as one doomed to destruction; but he felt his deserts, and never murmured. He was solemn as the grave. No one ever saw a smile upon his

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countenance. Day by day he walked to his field with the burden upon his soul, but still he felt that God was just, and he admired that justice. He was ready to bless the hand that was lifted for his destruction. Months elapsed, and the minister of Jesus passed that way. He heard the plan of redemption unfolded; he read in the New Testament of the sufferings of Christ, and the economy of grace. How beautiful was its fitness! He wept, he wondered, he adored. He thought of the atonement, not as a doctrine in theology to be canvassed and discussed, but as a matter of personal interest and experience. The agony and the blood seemed concentrated on him as its object. Christ died for *me*, was the burden of his song through life. Christ died for me, were the words which trembled on his lips when he died. My brethren, we give a prominence to this doctrine of Christ crucified in our preaching and our faith; we assent to it as the great source of our hope; but who of us dwells upon it with such rapture as it merits? who of us stirs himself to repay this matchless, this amazing debt?

IV. My last illustration of the indifference produced by familiarity is in respect to the doctrine of future retribution.

Suppose we had no knowledge of eternity; suppose that Christ had never come to "bring immortality to light;" suppose moreover that every trace of this glorious doctrine were blotted out from the nature of man; that he should look within, and read no prophetic indications in the desires and aspirings of his soul; that he should stand by the bedside of the dying, and no enkindling eye, no gushing eloquence, no rapt vision of the prostrate one should speak of the life of the spirit begun anew, rather than ended forever; that he should go to weep at the grave, and the last sight should be the ghastliness of death, and the last sound should be the earth crumbling harshly and heavily upon the coffin; that he should go away with that sight and that sound to haunt him through life; that in the one, he should read the monotonous lesson of cold-

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ness and silence and corruption; in the other, he should hear the hollow murmur, "Death is an eternal sleep;"—no blessed hopes of reunion with the departed, no sweet consciousness of their still hovering about his pathway, nothing to check his own rush toward that oblivious gulf, nothing to cheer the prospect of eternal gloom;—suppose that now in the midst of this ignorance and darkness a voice was heard in heaven proclaiming, "The dead shall live," "The dead shall live!" Those words penetrate every ear; they vibrate on every soul, startling the stupid, comforting the cheerless, and lighting up the expiring eye with the brilliancy of a new life. But soon a doubt clouds the new begotten joy. The dead shall live; but *how long?* Are they destined to another brief career like this, and yet another and another, each to be ended by the same destroyer, till the last link in the chain of light goes out in darkness. The dead shall live, but *how long?* And in the midst of heaven, in characters of living light, and so that every eye can see it, is written that word—*forever*. Glorious thought! This spark is quenchless. *Forever* is now the word that trembles on every tongue, and rings through the universe. Instantly how changed becomes the aspect of the world! How new and godlike the appearance of the creation in the light it borrows from eternity, in the dignity it assumes as the threshhold of an existence which shall never terminate! And how noble becomes the bearing of man! Yesterday the creature of a moment—to-day, the heir of immortality. But the revelation is not yet completed. The dead shall live forever; but *how?* What is to be the character of that eternity, what its relation? Does it open upon us scenes of joy or of wo? Does it divide between the happy and the miserable at hap-hazard, or is there some great law of distinction? The dead shall live forever, but *how?* And a still small voice from the depths of the soul comes up with the tidings of retribution; and the Spirit of the living God confirms the decision in the fearful sentence—"He that

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is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Oh! my friends, think you that such a universe would be full of cold and inactive beings? Would they give themselves any rest until they had complied with the conditions of salvation? Would there not be hurrying to and fro, and anxious countenances of those who would save themselves, or pluck their fellow-sinners as brands from the burning? But, as for us, we do not live in such a community. These are no new truths to us. Old are they as the bible, familiar as the first elements of knowledge—and we do not feel them. The christian knows that he is an heir of heaven; but he does not walk erect as if he were conscious of it. The sinner knows that he is a candidate for hell; but he never looks aghast at its horrors. And we, my brethren, surrounded by the perishing—comes their wail to us from the distance of heathenism, or see we them hurrying to perdition from our own families and neighborhood—can scarcely lift a finger to hold them back from their doom. A few cold prayers, a few heartless efforts, instead of the zeal and the agony of those who look into the hole of the pit from which themselves have been digged.

These illustrations might be indefinitely multiplied. The principle of our discourse would be found true in respect to almost all the more important and familiar doctrines of our religion. It is verified also in our most common religious privileges. We often need a temporary seclusion from the ordinances of the gospel, in order to impress us with their value. It is "by the rivers of Babylon that we sit down and weep while we remember Zion." To the traveler long absent in distant climes there is an unwonted melody in the sabbath-bells of his native land. To the son just returned from his wanderings to the paternal roof, the family altar assumes a beauty and a dignity he can no longer despise; and the voice of the old man at prayer has a solemn eloquence that comes home to the heart. And you, my brother, when

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disease or affliction have made you a long exile from the public worship of God, with what delight do you repair to his temple! With David you sing, "how amiable are thy tabernacles," as you come up from the solitude where you have panted and fainted for the courts of the Lord. Beautiful indeed to you are the feet of them that publish glad tidings, and the walls of Jerusalem and the gates of Zion you prefer above all the dwellings of Jacob.

In view of this subject I remark,

First, That truth is just as real and as certain as if we were not insensible to it.

If the principle of the discourse be correct, if our familiarity with religious truths has often a tendency to make us look coldly upon them, it must follow, that our degree of appreciation is no measure of their value. It is just as true, that God is everywhere about us, always mindful of our wants, though we never think of him. It is just as true, that Christ comes to us by the bright lessons of his example and the melting doctrines of his death, though we turn our backs alike on the manger and the cross. It is just as true, that we are pressing onward to eternity, though we grasp after present pleasure, and think not of the future. Truth is perfect and immutable amid all the weakness and changes of man. God is not indifferent when he finds his paternal love slighted and despised. Christ is not unaffected when we turn coldly away from his tender entreaties, though he come repeatedly with the expostulation, "How often would I—but ye would not." And destruction is sure to those who persevere in sin; though they go to their doom like a blind man hurrying to a precipice, or a drunkard dancing among pitfalls.

Secondly, The subject teaches us the imperfection of our present state, and the way to overcome it.

We are so debased by the power of sin, so groveling in our moral tastes, so limited in our views, so short-lived in our emotions, and so easily exhausted by their intensity, that the most

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beautiful objects soon lose their beauty to us. Truth seems to partake of the infirmities of our poor decaying bodies. But it is not so in heaven. There the soul never tires in the thought of God, however intimate may be his manifestations. There the secret of redemption is perfectly revealed, but it has an interest and a power ever fresh; and the choir of heaven never grow weary or stupid, as they cease not day or night their rapturous hallelujahs to the Lamb. The great reason is that there, love is more perfect. And those who on earth approach the nearest to the spirit of Heaven, who are most in love with the truth, are best able to break away from this dulness and indifference. Do you suppose that the true poet ever becomes indifferent to the beauties of nature because of their familiarity? No! he loves them so well, that they burst upon his vision with new glory every day. Suppose you that the mother of Jesus turned coldly away from him when he came to preach in the neighborhood of his home? Not so. Others despised him because they knew him so well; but she who knew him better than all, for the love that she bore him as her son and her Saviour, no doubt received him to her bosom with fresh tenderness, and pondered his sayings in her heart. And so the man who loves God as he should love him, can neither walk abroad nor look inward, without a delightful and perpetual consciousness of his presence and goodness. He to whom the Redeemer is indeed "the chief among ten thousands," never becomes wearied with the oft-heard name, or cold towards the ever-present brother. Rather pants he for a more intimate communion. The language of his soul is, "Make haste, my beloved and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices." "Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly." If the sinner would break away from the stupidity he feels in the midst of light, he must learn to love that light. If the Christian would wake from his lethargy and have an abiding sense of the reality and glory of truth, he

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must cultivate a greater love for it; he must meditate upon it till he discovers new grace in its proportions, new life in its lineaments, new loveliness in its beauty—until it becomes in his soul that living principle, which is as exhaustless in its nature, as it is glorious in the action to which it prompts.

Thirdly, The subject teaches us that men, if saved at all, are saved not because they have been furnished with christian privileges, but because they have made a right use of them.

There are many who live, as if they imagined men could not go down to perdition from under the refining influences of the gospel. But to such the subject gives a fearful lesson of the tendency of these very influences if they are not rightly improved, to harden the heart and ripen it for destruction. If their doom be terrible who have provoked swift ruin upon themselves by heaven-daring crimes, how much more dreadful is the wo pronounced by our Saviour against such as having been "exalted to heaven are thrust down to hell." My fellow sinner, when you stand at the bar of judgment, and the books are opened, and the sentence is about to be pronounced against you, do not think of saying to the Judge, "I know thee well. I was a member of the community thou didst so often visit. Thou hast taught in our streets. From my earliest childhood I learned by heart the story of thy life and sufferings. And every sabbath, thy ambassadors warned me of judgment and eternity." Then shall the Judge answer and say, "Depart from me, I never knew you. The doctrines of my gospel fit not those for heaven, who know them so well, that they never *feel* them. Your voice would mingle feebly with the praises of the blood-bought band. If any sinner is to be pardoned at this the eleventh hour of the universe, let it rather be some poor soul who comes from the depths of ignorance and gloom, and who will know how to value the light and blessedness of heaven."

Finally, while this familiarity with religious truth may ren-

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der the impenitent on earth indifferent to its power, there is no reason to believe that familiarity with suffering will at all diminish the agony of their disembodied spirits. It is indeed the insufferable blaze of truth that constitutes the chief misery of the lost, but such as it sometimes for a moment bursts upon their distracted vision in this life, such will it be with ever increasing vividness and intensity when their souls break away from these imperfect frames. The naked spirit knows no reaction, and the sense of God's wrath never becomes old. My fellow-sinner, when you observe in this life, the nature of sickness and suffering to destroy their own power, when you see the diseased limb losing its sensitiveness, or the long prostrate invalid becoming reconciled to his lot, think not that it will be so with you. It is written upon your own immortal nature, as well as upon the pages of God's word, that "the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

NOTE.

The preceding discourse was the first which Mr. Homer wrote. It was preached at South Berwick, May 3, 1840; afterwards at Danvers, Mass.

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SERMON II.

THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN SUPERIOR TO THE ANGELS.

KNOW YE NOT THAT WE SHALL JUDGE ANGELS?—1 Cor. 6 : 3.

THESE words have sometimes been thought to indicate that the saints will share in the administration of the general judgment. Such an idea however is not authorized either by reason or revelation, and it is highly improbable that the redeemed will turn away from their own award of justice, to pass sentence on "the angels who kept not their first estate." There is a mode of explaining the passage more consonant with the spirit and the idioms of scripture. The language of the bible often derives its significance from some single feature of analogy. The metaphors of animate and inanimate creation with regard to God and his people are not to be pushed to the extent of their literal meaning. When Jehovah is called a rock, or his people the sheep of his pasture, only a single view of their character and relation may be presented. And so is it in the terms derived from civil and ecclesiastical polity. It is not intended to describe an office precisely similar to that in church or state, but only a condition marked by some similar qualities. When Christians are spoken of as kings and priests, it is not meant that they wear a crown or minister at an altar; that they sway a sceptre, or intercede for the sins of the people, but rather that in heaven,

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they are exalted and honored like kings and priests on earth. Official relation is not at all designated, merely official dignity. In this way the office of a judge is most appropriately employed to image forth the same elevation. It is one of the most dignified and imposing of human titles. It brings before the mind the picture of venerable wisdom upon its elevated seat, dictating the noblest of sentiments to the noblest of pupils, and receiving the homage of the crowd. What more natural than that the beings, who are figuratively decked with the sceptre of royal dignity, and the mitre of sacerdotal rank, should put on also the vestments of the judicial station. They receive the admiring tribute of the world, and they may be styled the judges of the world. They are in some respects more glorious than the angels of God, and they may be said to judge those angels. The sentiment then, which I propose to illustrate as taught in the text, is this:

Christians in heaven will in some respects be superior to angels.

Our acquaintance with the angelic, as with other spiritual beings, is exceedingly limited. Sufficient, however, may be gathered from Scripture to teach the existence of an order of intelligences in many respects superior to men. They are represented as the counselors of Jehovah, and the swift ministers to do his will. They are the mediators of the old dispensation. Through them the Most High comes down to wrestle and to commune with men. In shining hosts they hover around Mount Sinai, and crowd the chariots of God as the "fiery law goes forth from his right hand." Sometimes they appear as ministers of vengeance to smite down the doomed of God, and strike with awe the beholders. Yet chiefly do they serve on errands of mercy and love. In airy columns they follow the tribes of Israel in their wanderings, and guide them to the land of promise. They watch over the elect of God in temporal and in spiritual peril, "encamping round about them to deliver them." They gather in choirs over the

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shepherd-plains of Bethlehem, rending the still air of evening with unwonted anthems of praise. With refreshment and sympathy they visit Jesus in the solitude of his temptation, and they wipe the thick drops from his brow on the night of his agony. They stand by as he sunders the cerements of burial, and tell the news of his rising to those who are earliest at his grave. Arrayed in white apparel they explain on Olivet the mystery of his ascension, and the certainty of his second advent. They shall appear again to the gaze of men, when they come in the retinue of his judgment, by their presence to add to the imposing spectacle, and assist in the services of the great day of account.

For such offices and employments, most elevated and conspicuous must be their qualities. How beautiful must be "the face of angels," radiant with the lustre of the eternal throne. How enlarged must be "the wisdom of angels," attendants as they are upon the council-chamber of the All Wise. How vast must be their powers, when even "the winds and the lightnings" cannot outstrip their swiftness, or surpass their workmanship. Above all, how spotless must be their purity, looking upon God with a familiar gaze which could but drive the sinful to despair. Yet with all these splendid capacities, with all this ecstasy of devotion, they must be strangers to the joys of the redeemed. Even we, my brethren, frail though we be, imperfect in our best services, groping through life, many of us, on an almost starless pilgrimage; even we, the creatures of a day, who should tremble and turn pale at the approach of one of these winged messengers of immortality, are yet destined to enjoyments of which they can know but little. There are lights in heaven to be revealed to our vision which shine but dimly upon their souls. There are mansions reserved for us among the many in our Father's house, which they cannot enter. Hard by the altar, there is a place of sweet and humble devotion where we shall

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love to linger, but where the highest archangel is too high to prostrate himself, or to cast his crown.

I. We will commence our proof of the proposition already laid down, by remarking, that Christians in heaven will be conscious of great advancement in their condition and character.

There is a familiar principle of the human mind, upon which this source of happiness is founded. The law of progress is one of the fixed laws of our nature; and it is a most wise provision that this progress is not accidental, but the result and reward of personal effort. No great advancement can be made without toil and suffering, and the remembrance of the former pain is the chief ingredient in the present joy. The traveler, who has gained the desired eminence, feels a satisfaction in looking down over the steep and craggy rocks up which he has climbed, and through the dark ravines where he wandered weary and famishing; and it is a satisfaction which he could not have felt had an unseen hand planted his first existence on the spot of his triumph. There is pleasure by a winter fireside, in the companionship of loved ones, and the shelter of a thrifty mansion; but it is chiefly when the rugged inmate travels over again in fancy his perilous voyages, and again in memory "the storm howls through the rigging." We sometimes feel as if the horrors of shipwreck in the winter, of long and tedious wrestling with the pestilence, of marching front to front with death upon the battle field, were more than compensated by the gratification of the old veteran when he recounts in after years his tales of wonder, and the sentiment speaks out in his eloquent eye—

"All which I saw, and part of which I was."

Nor is this principle developed merely in circumstances of outward superiority. Not only do the rich and happy recur with satisfaction to the period of their poverty and distress;

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but the scholar prizes his acquisitions most, when he thinks of the aching brow and the midnight study which secured them, and hopes most cheeringly for the attainments of the future, when he thinks of the ignorance of the past. The Christian adores most gratefully the grace of God, when he thinks of the pollution from which he has been snatched, when he looks back to the temptations through which he has been guided, and the spiritual hazards which have only disciplined him for manliness of character and purity of faith.

We cannot deny that angels may be the subjects in some measure of this law of progress. No doubt they have had a period of probation, which may be now closed, so that they are enjoying the assurance of complete confirmation. No doubt their capacities are progressively enlarging, so that they enjoy a satisfaction similar to ours, when they compare the knowledge and power of the present with the past. Yet substantially their nature and relations and enjoyments must have continued forever the same. No cloud of misery or doubt has ever for a moment obscured their vision. No sin has ever crept in to defile by its slightest touch their nature. However great the changes in their condition, they can never have crossed "the great gulf" from pain to bliss, from sin to purity. The variation is in the degree, and not the kind of their enjoyment. Not so will it be with us. All the changes we undergo in our earthly career, are not to be compared with that of which we shall be sensible, when we enter into our final reward. If we joy in our earthly escapes, and our earthly advancement, what must be our ecstasy at that widest and highest flight, when we enter on our new career of accelerated progress.

First, The spirit will be free from the depressing influence of a material body.

We do wrong when we indulge in sweeping invectives against our imperfect physical nature. We should not undervalue the body. It is the stepping stone to immortality.

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The soul can be best cradled by it in its nascent state, when first born into a world of knowledge and action. Its subsequent maturity and perfection are no doubt best secured by such an alliance. Its knowledge of the relations of space and time, and many of its most important susceptibilities of pain and pleasure, are derived from its connexion with this curiously wrought frame-work. Yet however indebted the soul may be to the discipline of this preparatory school, it is evident that a material frame is in no way fitted for the eternal home of the spirit. Even if man had continued morally perfect there would probably have been much of imperfection incident to his physical nature. The spirit happy in the consciousness of purity would yet have panted for clearer views, larger knowledge, more intimate communion with its Maker. I think it is beyond a question, that the happy family would have continued but for a season to pluck the fruits of the garden, and enjoy the privileges of its devout and holy intercourse. The eye would have beamed with the hope of a brighter existence, and the mind would have expanded in the anticipation of communion with the unseen. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they would have all been changed." Even those who in our imperfect world have approached the nearest to a subjugation of the body, seem but to have been ripened for their dissevered spirituality. Enoch walked with God so intimately, that death seemed afraid to shake at him his dreadful dart. Yet he could not be left to immortality on earth; but, as if the body were no sphere for such purity and cultivation, "he was not, for God took him." Elijah, in a career which seemed more like that of an angel of light, than a prophet of earth, smote death in the widow's son, and faced his stern visage in the strength which the birds of the air did minister. Yet neither was he left to prosecute his great work of frowning down the enemies of the Lord, and shining as the conspicuous forerunner of his Messiah. He was caught up in a whirlwind of flame, to be

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charioteer of a warfare higher than that of Israel. The larger the thoughts, the more efficient the activity, the more do we pant after a sphere of unimpeded progress and action. I appeal to many of you, my brethren, whether there have not been moments in your experience, when views of truth or glimpses of your high destiny were so vividly presented that you felt unable to sustain the gaze. Bewildered and astonished, you felt restless longings to be free from a frame that could be so shattered by what your souls most craved and loved. Your language then was, "Oh! that I had wings like a dove;" for then would I fly out of these dim windows into the clear noonday of the presence of my God. We feel that there is that without and that within, after which we hunger and thirst with unutterable cravings; yet this dying nature cannot feed upon such heavenly food.

> "There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim;
> Such harmony is in immortal souls,
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it."

"There is," says the apostle, "a spiritual body." Wonderful and mysterious provision of divine benevolence! God does not design that the dead in Christ shall be merely restored to moral perfection in heaven. He unites the perfect spirit with as perfect a nature. He imbues it with a frame adapted to its high behests, and its consummate cultivation. Even he hath an eye on the crumbling dust of his chosen. In the morning of the great resurrection, they come not up rusty and time-worn from their tabernacle of clay, or congealed and dripping from their cold dark bed in the ocean. Blessed be God, "there is a spiritual body." Immortal beauty beams from their brow. The robe they wear is incorruptible. Onward and upward stretches the soul's field of vi-

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sion—vast, illimitable. What looked dark to the earthly eye, becomes bright with the light of God. What the mind toiled to attain, till its strained efforts ended in disease or blindness, is now revealed in an instant, with no long processes of half-seen truth to detain, but in the blessedness of quick intuition. And farther beyond lie still undiscovered truths, to keep the mind alive with perpetual excitement, to prompt it to constant action, to secure by vigorous exercise its discipline and continued action. But principally are the hindrances to moral cultivation which are incident to our physical nature, absorbed and subdued in that new system. The passions assume their appropriate and subordinate seat. The dim media, by which the soul strove to look into perfection, shall give place to perfection itself. Faith and hope shall be swallowed up in vision. But love shall remain. "Yea," says Tholuck, "not only shall it remain, but the narrow brook, which in this life flowed from deeply hidden fountains, will in that life become a wide stream. Here love could be preserved only while the eye of faith held the invisible world directly before itself. Try it, shut for an instant this internal eye, and thou wilt love only what thou seest. Ah! why dost thou hang solely upon the creatures of earth and long after them? Why but because their eye of faith is not open, and thou seest not the invisible glory of the Father's image. But when there shall be no more need of this intellectual exertion, when the thick cloud of the earthly vale shall no longer press upon the eye of faith, when the very object, in which we here faintly believe, shall stand constantly before our vision —oh how easy will it then be to love! The death of the believer shall be the death also of his faith and hope, but it shall be the resurrection-hour of his love."

Secondly, Christians in heaven will be released from the pain and misery incident to their earthly condition.

These bodies of ours are not only gross but perishing. They not only hold the immortal part in vassalage, but it is

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a vassalage which galls and goads, and sends the heart bleeding and broken to the grave. "All our life time through fear of death, we are in bondage." We feel the disease stealing over our own frames. We trace its sure marks on the visage of our most beloved. To the vigorous and blooming in whom we trust most securely, death comes in the form of sudden and appalling calamity. "There are some persons," as an old writer has expressed it, "upon whose foreheads every man can read the sentence of death written in the lines of a lingering sickness, but *they* sometimes hear the passing-bell ring for stronger men, even long before their own knell calls at the house of their mother earth to open her doors and make a bed for them." Yet there is a wretchedness more dreadful than this bodily suffering, or this personal bereavement. There is a prospect more gloomy than the solitude of sorrow, or the throbbings of continued pain. It is when the diseases of this shattered body turn inward to feed upon the mind. Even the healthful and wise and good are not free from the scourge of insanity. It has been estimated that its ravages are fearfully multiplying as civilization advances, so that beyond the accidental causes which may produce it, we must be in terror from those which are incident to the progress of society. There is scarcely an educated man, or one that has been accustomed deeply and intensely to ponder the workings of his own mind, that has not felt some forebodings of this mental disease. "Chain me face to face with death," says such a one, "and let my life be prolonged in lingering agonies, the stern monarch ever in my eyes—strip from me every object of earthly love, though the deep fastened fibres are left naked, and with no object to cling to—yet touch not, derange not that noble workmanship within. So I may look up to God from the depth of my woe, I will not murmur."

In heaven all these pangs and griefs and anxieties are forever hushed. There the system contemplates with delight its own healthful and symmetrical action, with no fever-

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ish dread lest its wheels become disordered, and begin to move with jarring and painful discord. There shall be no night there. The dim ray of happiness which cheered our pilgrimage deepens into the full sunlight of fruition. The memory of the past, in the resurrection of its forgotten treasures, becomes as vivid as the consciousness of the present. And the light of day grows brighter in the reminiscence of night. Chiefly does this faculty aid us in making our former losses on earth, our gain in heaven. This is a rapture which angels cannot know. That seraph never receives back a child to his embrace, or welcomes the returning companion from his long absence. They know not of separation. Ever their spirits commingle and tabernacle together, and space and time can interpose no barriers to the perfection and the constancy of their intercourse. Not so, my brethren, will it be with us. The shining messengers who welcome us home shall be our old familiar friends. Distinct and palpable to our spiritual vision shall be the outline of each well-remembered and well-loved form. With what joy shall we recount to each other the perils of the past, and congratulate ourselves on the secure and blissful and everlasting communion to which our God exalted us.

Thirdly, Christians in heaven will be perfectly free from sin.

The perfection of the physical system which has already been described, if it were under the government of depraved passions instead of being swayed by moral purity, would only aggravate the misery of its possessors. The absence of every external malady and pain would drive the soul more dismally inward to brood over its own moral wastes, and would quite shut out the prospect of relief from ultimate annihilation. In a system so perfectly articulated, so immense in its resources, so rapid in its activity, sin would be furnished with new powers of development, and new faculties of operation. With new alacrity would it stalk abroad to the work of ruin

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without, or prey inward in the processes of its endless suicide. What would be the expansion of knowledge, but the perpetual communion of the guilty with the wrath of God, and the ability to sound the depths of that wo into which they were forever plunging. What would be the ever-living memory, but the power of conjuring up the spectres of old transgressions to haunt the scared spirit, and "never down at its bidding." What would be the renewal of old associations, but a companionship where each laid open to the other the hideousness of his own depravity, and each was stimulated in his mad and miserable career by the mutual exhibition. Oh love it and dote upon it as we may, there is nothing to be compared with sin, when it unsheathes its scorpion-stings, and commences the work of self-retribution. Bind your victim to the rack, and let him linger out his eternity in lacerations which heal up only to be torn afresh; with a good conscience and a pure soul, he may look up and smile from his wretchedness. But with the enemy in his bosom he is insecure in a rock-built mansion—miserable on an archangel's throne.

> "He that has light within his own clear breast
> May sit i' th' centre, and enjoy bright day;
> But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
> Benighted walks under the mid-day sun,
> Himself is his own dungeon."

The heaven of the Christian,—so speaks the tongue of inspiration, so speak the demands of our own spiritual nature,—is an abode of moral purity. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." It is chiefly because "the wicked cease from troubling," that "the weary are at rest." To the heirs of that blissful portion how delightful the contrast! Here sin was their great enemy. It sat crouched like a lurking beast at the door of their hearts. It sparkled in the cup of pleasure. Arrayed in the habiliments of purity, it met them by the way-side, and now openly and fearlessly it assail-

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ed them as a strong man armed. Only in the last fading hour when it stood to mock and triumph by the bed of death, did it receive its signal overthrow, and shrink abashed from the scene. They went through life wrestling. They reach home toil-worn. But every spiritual fear is at length hushed. The warring is completed. The imperishable crown of victory is put on. With what delight, from this house of refuge, do they look out upon the storms and battles of the past. The memory of each conflict enhances the value of their eternal reward. Each difficulty over which they stumbled in their earthly pilgrimage, makes more pleasant and smooth the pathway they now tread. There is a luxury in the penitence they still exercise for past transgressions, and they read over and over that dark sad history only to deepen the spirit of their devotions, and increase the ardor of their piety.

It will be perceived that in this first argument, only a partial superiority is claimed for the saints. It is not asserted that they excel the angels in every species of happiness, but only in that which results from a contrast with their former state. It is not so much that they are above the angels now, as that they were so far below them once; not so much that they possess higher powers and are enrobed in a more glorious nature, as that once their faculties were so limited, and their views so groveling. It is not that they are free from pain and safe from trouble, but that once they traveled over a stony path, and wet the ground with their tears. It is not that their existence is more spotless, or their praise more undefiled, but that once sin had a throne in their bosoms, and touched with unholy hand their purest sacrifices. They are the prodigal children brought home from long, dark, famished wanderings to their Father's house. Angels are the elder sons of the family—ever faithful to its regulations, ever rich in its bounties, never straying beyond the privileges of its joyous circle. But for the returning ones they make merry and are glad. Joy swells the bosom of the Father more than if he had never

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mourned over the lost and dead. Joy beams on the countenances of the ransomed more than if they had never chafed under the sad and distant captivity. Joy breathes in the praises of the angels over the repenting, more than over themselves, "the ninety and nine who need no repentance."

The second point of superiority must be reserved for a subsequent discourse. Let me conclude with a few words suggested by the view of the subject already presented. My christian friends, it speaks the language of comfort to you. It unravels the great mystery of your suffering; it shows that it is to be the occasion of your joy. Let not your hearts be troubled amid the vexations of your present existence. Be of good cheer. The tabernacle which now obstructs your spiritual vision, and impedes your heavenward flight, is not to be your eternal dwelling place. One day "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." The sufferings over which you now grieve shall be exchanged for unalloyed bliss, and the lost for whom you mourn are reserved to welcome your happy transition to the place they have gone to prepare for you. Cease not your spiritual warfare day or night, for the crown of a good soldier awaits you. Yea, and all these "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," for it is because you suffer so deeply now, that you will joy so exultingly hereafter. Grieve not for yourselves, but rather for those who participate in no such hopes; to whom eternity can but aggravate the miseries of time, and though the present is to them starless and sad, there is a blacker night in the future to which they are hastening. To them terrible indeed shall be the incorruptible body they put on, only endowing them with new powers of suffering, and making infinite their capacity for wo. To them the contrast of the blessed shall be reversed. They shall look back to earth as all their heaven. Its wil-

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dernesses shall assume a beauty to their distracted gaze. Its ignorance shall be deemed bliss compared with present knowledge. Its sorrows shall seem joys compared with present anguish. But even this heaven of their existence, poor, dark, brief though it be, they shall long pray for without avail. Earth was *all* their heaven, and even that is lost forever.

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SERMON III.

THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN SUPERIOR TO THE ANGELS.

KNOW YE NOT THAT WE SHALL JUDGE ANGELS?—1 Cor. 6: 3.

IN the preceding discourse, the sentiment deduced from the text and proposed for illustration, was, the superiority of saints to angels. A sketch of the history and character of angels proved that this superiority is not absolute and entire, extending to every feature of the constitution, but is rather limited to those particulars which are connected with the change from sin to holiness. The first point of superiority was stated to be, the consciousness which those who were elevated from earth to heaven might have of great advancement in their character and condition. This consideration was shown to be pertinent from the delight which the mind always takes in contemplating its own progress. In the glorified saints, the principle would be developed in several ways. They would rejoice in their dismemberment from the body, and in the clear views and enlarged capacities attained in their new and exalted nature. They would contrast their felicity with the pain and sorrow of earth, and regain the treasures which were once torn from them. Above all would they exult that they were now free from the captivity of sin—that the chains of that great master were at length broken—and while they joyed in the unimpeded exercise of present

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piety, they would bow in sweet humility under the recollection of former sin. These are sources of enjoyment to which angels in the permanent elevation of their nature, and their eternal freedom from sorrow and guilt must be strangers.

We proceed now to another source of the superior enjoyment of the saints, and remark,

II. Christians in heaven will be superior to angels from the peculiarly interesting relation they sustain to Christ.

Christ is the great central attraction of heaven. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews enters into an elaborate comparison between him and the angels. He shows that he has a more exalted name than they, being elevated to the privileges of sonship and heirship. He sits upon a throne and wields a sceptre, while they are but the ministers of his will. The heavens and the earth are represented as the product of his divine workmanship—the finite and fading creatures of his infinite and eternal power. Above all, and most conclusively for his argument, does the apostle appeal to that ancient description of the majesty of his kingdom, where "a fire goeth before him to devour his enemies," there is a vision of lightnings and a trembling world, and the hills seem to "melt like wax," before the awe-inspiring presence of this king of kings. Then from the midst of these terrible manifestations, there comes forth the mandate, "Let all the angels of God worship him." But not only is he superior to angels, and the object of their homage; he is himself God. Mystery of mysteries—God and not God! And not only is he himself Jehovah, but Jehovah descending from the throne of his deep invisible abstraction, and unveiling himself with peculiar beauty to the gaze. The eye that is fixed upon his loveliness needs no other light. The soul that dwells under the shadow of his mercy-seat can demand no better pavilion. And if there be distinction in rank among the various orders of heaven, will not those be the most princely, who are nearest to this royal head, who bear his mark upon their foreheads,

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and carry about with them "the white stone on which his name is written."

There are many circumstances which seem to indicate, that saints in heaven will sustain a personal relation to Christ more intimate and interesting than that of angels. Their whole career preparatory to that elevation seems fitted to fix his image most endearingly upon their hearts, and to make him the great essential of their being. Those seasons on earth which are most imbued with the spirit of heaven, are distinguished for the preciousness and the nearness with which his person seems to be revealed. I appeal to some of you, whether in those moments of devotion, when the world has receded, and "whether in the body or out of the body you could not tell," the one clear vision on the eye of your soul has not been the face of your Redeemer. And again in the seasons of trial and affliction, when the sundering of earthly hopes fixed the grieved spirit on the ark of its eternal refuge, and, reminded of the loneliness of your pilgrimage here, you caught glimpses of "the city that is yet to come"—Was not the Lamb the chief light thereof, when exultingly you exclaimed, that "nothing should separate you from the love of Christ." If there is any one thing remarkable in the triumph of dying Christians, it is the almost invariable uniformity with which they express themselves concerning the Saviour. To them he seems arrayed in new beauty. Tired and exhausted they lean upon his arm. When they feel that the night is dark and the waters are deep, through the shades the light of his smile is discerned, and they hear his cheering voice even while all the waves are passing over them. Sometimes to those whom death meets suddenly, by the way side, on the ocean, though they thought not of their coming doom, yet the watchful and all-seeing Guardian seemed with prophetic beauty to appear *to them*, and awaken almost unconsciously those views and hopes which he was soon to reward with full fruition. I knew of one not long since who perished

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thus unexpectedly. The last words heard from him were in the bloom of health, and the full flush of earthly promise. Yet the expression indicated that he was holding peculiar communion with his Saviour, and that he trusted himself with newly inspired faith to the care of his covenant Guide. The bible that floated ashore from the scene of his terrific death had marked as the theme of his recent meditation, the promise of the shepherd to support his chosen in the dark valley. Who could doubt that He who appeared to him to soothe his spirit for its approaching though unexpected conflict, not only stood by his side like a minister of mercy in suffering and anguish, but transported him to nearer and more blissful communion with himself in heaven.

But let us not rest merely on these prophetic indications. Let us again draw aside the veil, and look in upon the views and emotions of heaven. We shall find,

First, That Christians in heaven are permitted to contemplate Christ as their brother.

"Verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." On earth he sympathized with their sorrows and struggles, with their fruition he sympathizes now. In each reminiscence of the past, he has with them a fellow-feeling. Once he too found his aspiring nature pent up within the walls of a fleshly tabernacle. Once he too was the victim of disappointment and grief—submitting his sensitive nature to obloquy and abuse, wandering houseless and forsaken till "his head was filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night," groaning in spirit by the sepulchre of his companions and friends, and giving up the ghost with physical and mental tortures even more than man could conceive. Nor did he, spotless and pure though he was, escape the assaults of the great moral enemy. He encountered sin as the great obstacle to his successful mission. It met him in the depraved and short-sighted views of his chosen, in the sneers and contempt of his enemies. In

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the person of the adversary it followed his famished frame to the wilderness, it whispered to him the language of rebellion in the garden, it stood mocking his agonies upon the cross. In that last fearful moment, gathering all its strength and virulence, by some mysterious process, it weighed upon his soul as if himself had been the guilty, and left him to expire in despair. But now, like his beloved, the more exalted and glorious is he that he humbled himself so low. "The captain of our salvation is made perfect through sufferings." How intimate and how blissful must be the communion between this elder brother and the family of his saints. The robe he wears is like their own, though infinitely more resplendent. He no doubt appears in that glorified humanity, that spiritual corporeity which is the vesture of his saints. Such as it appeared on the mount of transfiguration—the sunlike visage, and the glistering raiment; such as it shone forth on the morning of the ascension, when a cloud enveloped his unutterable glory; such as John fainted before, when he "saw in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the son of man," and "heard the voice as the sound of many waters." Far as the dialects of heaven exceed the impoverished epithets of earth, so far will that outward glory exceed our highest imagination. Angels will wonder and adore. In their intercourse with the saints we may conjecture that their exclamations in view of this ravishing beauty will be most delightful. How that form, such a one may say, attracts to itself the admiring gaze of heaven. "Fairer art thou than the children of men. Grace is poured into thy lips. God hath blessed thee forever." He is my brother, will be the reply. He was my chosen companion and guide, even when I saw him not. Ever he stood by my side, unfolding the picture of his spotless life, whispering the injunctions of his blessed gospel, beckoning to the participation of his own inheritance. What was then revealed only to the half-opened eye of the soul, has become the blessedness of full vision. I

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can see him as he is. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Secondly, They will contemplate him as their Redeemer.

Redemption is probably the great culminating point of the universe. From those glimpses which are given us of the employments and praises of the upper world, we cannot doubt that it is the theme upon which angels most delight to dwell. And as it is the praise of heaven, it is no doubt the joy of myriads of worlds unrevealed to us. Only the inhabitants of earth may be directly benefited, but it involves principles in the divine character and administration, which must attract the interest and love of all God's intelligent creatures. Some seraph has no doubt been employed to communicate it even to the remotest corner of the creation. For long ages the universe may have been occupied in solving this great mystery, and it is worthy of such scrutiny. What an idea to dwell upon is that of God coming down in the person of his son, not merely to aid men by his example and his sympathy, but to suffer for their sins. How distinguishing the grace that selected the gloom of midnight in which its rays should be revealed. Because we had sunk so low that there was no other remedy, this intercessor extended his helping hand, and nailed to his own cross the sentence of our doom. Who can fathom that sovereign justice which passed by the angels who left their first estate, but for man accepted the provisions of redeeming love, and brought back the worst of rebels to the welcome of the best of sons. Oh! study it and analyze it as we may, bring forth from the store-house of the past its analogies, and let philosophy pretend to prop up with her theories this truth as it is in Jesus—it stands out alone in all history —grand, solitary, sublime, baffling all research, putting speculation to the blush, and leaving to the inquirer nothing but the simple unexplained concession: "Here mercy and jus-

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tice have met together, righteousness and peace have embraced each other." At the cross of Christ, the proud intellect of man casts off its arrogance, and asks for the spirit of a child. Here intelligences more elevated than ours stand abashed as they ponder this production of the infinite intellect of Jehovah. And, my brethren, what dignity and honor will belong to us, when we stand among that blood-bought band, and remember that the great work, which extorts the homage, though it exhausts the study of all worlds, was devised and executed for us. To the eyes of all creatures we shall stand forth, as the monuments of infinite grace, and the images of our Redeemer's love.

But there is another position than that of honor and dignity which we shall occupy, yet no less fraught with pleasure to ourselves, or endearment to him who gave himself for us. It is that humble consciousness that we are not our own, but that we are bought with a price. "Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy great name be all the glory." My friends, when we feel deeply indebted to a fellow-being for some benefit conferred, how is our enjoyment enhanced even by the consciousness of unfulfilled obligation. We are so constituted that the pleasures of sympathetic gratitude are higher than the satisfaction of a full discharge, and the soul never flows with such full and free delight, as when it pours itself out in love for that which it can never repay. How we delight in the presence of our benefactor. With what affectionate interest do we listen to his words, and watch his slightest motions. How we exult when he is honored, how we rejoice when he is glad. Memory dotes on him in his absence, and the glistening eye follows him even in his far off journeyings. He becomes indeed the all in all of our being. Love that finds no adequate representation of its depths, that will not dare to express itself in words or deeds, lest the poor tribute belie the swelling heart—such love returns back to the bosom from which it has no outlet, and there it finds a thousand avenues

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through which to diffuse its streams of joy, and make the life of its possessor a perpetual fountain of delights. But an apostle has said that no human analogy can reach the love of the Son of God. It surpasses the brightest examples of history, it transcends the highest conceptions which our poor sense of justice will admit. And far as the benefaction of our Redeemer is superior to our experience of earthly favors, so high must be the gratitude and love which follow our contemplations and inspire our praises in another world. There is a luxury even in the sense of our own vileness, when that poverty becomes rich in the wealth of our Saviour. There is a pleasure in the memory of our own sin, when that guilt becomes innocence from the reflection of Christ's character, and we borrow a lustre and a nutriment from him, as the planets beam only in the sun, and the branches live only in the vine.

Thirdly, Jesus is the king of his saints.

It has been often questioned, whether the relation between Christ and his redeemed people will subsist forever. On the one hand, predictions of the eternity of his reign are found both in the Old and New Testament. On the other, it is distinctly intimated in one passage, that a period of consummation shall arrive, when the mediator shall lay down his office, and surrender his kingdom unto the Father. In order to reconcile these two assertions, it has been said that the eternity predicated of Christ's reign is only relative, and designates merely a protracted and not an endless duration. But the moment we admit such license with reference to eternity predicated of the future state, that moment we overthrow the barriers of legitimate interpretation, and leave room for a host of conjectures concerning the limits of future punishment. I suppose rather that the limit which seems to be assigned to Christ's reign, is the limit affixed to his official work as Mediator. Until the day of judgment he has the power of standing as a daysman between the sinner and his God. After that

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period,—fearful truth to those who have not availed themselves of it before,—his redemption is no longer proffered to the lost. Justice seals up its dreadful account, and ceases to commune with mercy. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." As a mediator for the future Christ lays down his office, but as the mediator of the past he can never cease to shine with distinct and personal glory. Neither reason nor scripture authorize the belief that his peculiar relation to his chosen will ever terminate, or that there can be a period when he shall lay down all his official honors, and sink into the indistinguishable godhead. Ever distinct and palpable will he no doubt be to the vision of the redeemed, the continued and ceaseless object of their homage and their praise. It is the Lamb himself that shall lead them and guide them, and wipe all tears from their eyes.

Nor is it unreasonable to suppose that there are purposes to be fulfilled by this eternal reign, purposes as yet unrevealed to us, but in accomplishing which, we shall have peculiar interest and instrumentality. We cannot suppose that God is then any more than now to act by immediate power, fulfilling his glorious plans, accomplishing his stupendous work, by the efficacy of his simple word. He will not surround himself with myriads of exalted creatures, merely to be gazed at and admired. He does not design that they shall sit down, the idle and inactive spectators of his operations, but he gives them a work fitted to command such energies and faculties as theirs. This is the economy of heaven. And we, my brethren, delighting as we do in our Saviour's service on earth, willing to tread in the footsteps of his sorrow if we may but honor his name, what must be our happiness, when without the impediments which check us here, we submit our new-created and exalted powers to be controlled and directed by him forever. That child of Christ on earth, who is permitted the honor of bearing his gospel across the ocean, and proclaiming its glad news to some remote and benighted idola-

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tor, feels that it is a joyous and well-paid service, though he encounters peril and reproach, and after all lays down his bones among the mountains, long before the "fruits are seen to shake like Lebanon." How must he be delighted when he finds himself endowed with physical properties which know no fatigue—able at the will of his king to travel over space, to rove among stars and suns on his errands of love, and to spend eternity in those princely duties which are already marked out for us, though ear hath not heard, nor heart conceived their number and their vastness. In the councils of that kingdom, we no doubt shall be admitted to an intimacy greater than that of angels, and in the prosecution of its plane, we shall be the chief administrators. How the benevolent heart must glow with the prospect of eternal action, and we who know not how we can admire too much the love of Christ as it has already been revealed, may yet be employed in aiding him on similar projects, which his exhaustless and infinite goodness may suggest.

Contrast the humblest saint who comes home from his earthly pilgrimage to heaven with the highest archangel who ministers before the throne. He glorious in holiness, splendid in beauty, terrible in power! We would not diminish the height of his elevation, or impair the lustre of his crown. But who is this that comes toil-worn and timid from terrestrial strugglings, and upon whose unprepared vision the glories of the upper world are bursting in their full effulgence. That song of angels which ceases neither day or night—we would not detract from its harmony or its significance. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Verily the majesty of the Invisible is deserving of such homage; and the wonders of creation even of old waked into melody the sons of God, when with the morning-stars they "shouted and sang together for

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joy." Yet there is a song more rapturous and elevated, such as breaks from the lips of the new inmate, and is echoed by the sympathetic choir of the saints, until all heaven rings with the gladsome acclamation, "Worthy the Lamb that was slain, for he has redeemed *me* by his blood." John seems to have had glimpses of this superiority in his apocalyptic vision. He speaks of "a new song that no man could learn but the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from the earth." He means that although angels are constrained to join in that song, it has a significance which they can never learn. Their well trained voices may harmonize with the music of the saints, but there is a melody of the soul unawakened in them, a chord of the heart untouched. They can never say, This Lamb was slain *for us*. Accordingly their position is represented as not in such immediate proximity to the throne of Jesus. The nearest to that seat of honor are those who represent the church of the redeemed. They commence the new and exalted strain, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Next after them, the angels who form a circle around, unable to repress their sympathy and admiration, to the number of "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands," cry with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." And finally the whole intelligent universe is introduced as uniting in this glorious tribute, and the chorus that swells all hearts and voices is, "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

This subject commends itself, in the first place, to such

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as are permitted to indulge these hopes and anticipations for themselves. "What manner of persons ought they to be." What self-respect, what consciousness of their own dignity, should they wear in all their demeanor. How ought they to look upon their brethren who are heirs with them of the same promises. It is to this use that the apostle chiefly applies the consideration, reproving the dissensions that had arisen among the disciples of Jesus. And it calls this church to a holy union. That brother of yours whom you wound by your opprobrium, is destined to the honors of a judge in the New Jerusalem. That weak and ignorant child of God, whom you pass by as beneath your notice, has a robe reserved for him and a crown more princely than earthly courts can boast. When you meet him at the table of your Redeemer, remember he shall one day be admitted to his council-chamber, and drink with him the new wine in the kingdom of his Father. Angels may yet take up the song after that slighted one, as they have already rejoiced over his repentance. Oh! my brethren, what strange beings we are! Should we go through life with our heads bowed down under sorrow, if we thought of that tearless paradise? Should we become so easy a prey to temptation, and suffer men to speak lightly of our principles and our piety, if we reflected on the purity to which we are destined, and the high rank on which we bring dishonor? Should we commune so seldom and so coldly with our Saviour, if we remembered that he is to be one day the fulness of our joy, and that angels might long for our nearness to him without attaining it? No! my brethren, we should walk erect and joyous, so that men might know us by the dignity of our mien, by the beaming of our eye, by the eloquent expression of our features, all of them showing the world, that we are already subsisting on heavenly food. We should fly from sin as not to be glanced at by the expectants of superangelic purity. We should cling to Jesus as if our nearness to his throne in heaven were to be measured by our

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nearness to his cross and his altar on earth. Even here we should catch some strains of that new song of the redeemed, and released from the fear of death, our souls would often pant with restless aspirings for that brighter and better portion with Christ.

Finally, our subject appeals in the language of affectionate invitation to such as have yet no title to this blessed inheritance. My friends, religion often comes to you in a voice of terror, and it is but just that the terrors of the law should be sounded in the ears of the slumbering and the dead. But today, she comes arrayed in her best white robe, and with a voice of mild entreaty. She holds out to you a crown brighter than that of angels. She brings to your ear strains of celestial music. She beckons you to the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Behold! all things are now ready. And Jesus has expended his most costly sacrifice, that he might purchase you a seat at the table of his chosen. Will you, can you, slight the invitation, and turn away from the price of blood, and the songs of heaven, and the voices of the dead, till the door shall be forever shut?

NOTE.

The two preceding discourses were finished Feb. 21, 1840. In a letter of the same date he says, "This week I have been writing a double sermon from 1 Cor. 6: 3, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' The thought of my departed friend, Mr. Brown, was constantly with me. I could not refrain from making direct allusion to him, as the prophetic indications of his death seemed to speak definitely of his reward with the Shepherd." The sermons were preached at South Berwick, May 10, 1840; and afterwards at Danvers, Mass. Under date May 15, 1840, he writes, "Last sabbath, I preached the two sermons I gave you to read, and they seemed to produce very considerable impression; much more than I expected. As I was making a pastoral visit the next day, a lady said to me, 'were you acquainted with that Mr. Brown of Boston, to whom you alluded in your afternoon discourse?' I need not tell you how the question affected me."

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SERMON IV.

THE CHARACTER AND CONDITION OF THE SINNER WHO IS NEARLY A CHRISTIAN.

THOU ART NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD.—Mark 12: 34.

THESE words were addressed to a well educated and interesting young man, in the crowd of cavilers and sceptics, who on a certain occasion had gathered around Jesus. He alone stood forth among the captious and the scoffing, as a sincere inquirer for the truth. Most pleasing must have been the spectacle afforded by that kind and conciliatory dialogue. Most eloquent must have been the approval which kindled in the Saviour's eye, as he saw that "the young man answered discreetly." Beautiful, yet not unmixed with sadness is the brief expression, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

As in many other cases of scriptural narrative, we have here but the fragment of an individual's history. The sacred penman often gives but a rapid sketch, only sufficient to attract our affections, and then draws the veil over the prospect. We just learn to love the man, when we lose his features amid the crowd through which we are rapidly hurried; and we trace in vain his progress and his destination. Yet for that very reason, more deep may be the impression and more varied the instruction from the single and imperfect portraiture.

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Imagination may seize upon some trifling incident, and fill up the outline, and yet the conviction will remain that the reality may have been far otherwise. Thus to the rich young man to whom Jesus addressed the reproof, "one thing thou lackest," we generally attribute a continued and final impenitence. We are distrustful of the fascination of wealth, and we doubt if a youth would turn from them, for the discipleship of such a master. And yet who knows that the reproof may not have sunk deep into his heart, and there exerted its appropriate influences, until he sacrificed his possessions on the altar of Christ. Very different is the customary apprehension of the incident in our text. We hear no more of the young inquirer, and yet so pleased are we with his spirit, that we picture out for him a happy end. We receive the impression that he who knew so well the significance of the old law, could not have been long in feeling the beauty of the new; that he who was "not far from the kingdom of God," would soon have been a member of that blessed community. And yet, for aught we know, a thousand incidents in the sluggish tendencies of the heart, in the dangers and difficulties attendant on a profession of Christianity, may have conspired to retard his progress, and death may have overtaken him with his hand on the door of the sanctuary, and yet before he had stepped within its blessed portal.

If Christ should appear in our own day, I think it beyond a question, that such a group might be gathered around him from this congregation. Here perhaps would be the hardened and captious, striving like the Scribes and Pharisees to entangle him in his talk. If they hear not Moses and the apostles, neither would they be persuaded though Christ himself should appear to them. Here too would be the serious, well-disposed, religious sinner, attracted by the beauty of his Saviour's countenance, and admiring the wisdom of his speech. You might see him following about the divine instructor, watching his motions, hanging upon his lips, seeking to touch,

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if it might be, the hem of his garment, and attracting attention by his earnest gaze, and his sincere inquiries. Yet would there not be a shade of sadness in the divine address to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

It becomes then an interesting topic of inquiry, what are the characteristics of one to whom the language of the text applies, and what are the errors and dangers to which he is peculiarly exposed?

I. I propose to describe the individual who is "not far from the kingdom of God."

First, He is distinguished for a moral and amiable life. There are many impenitent men whose characters have been most beautifully cultivated, by the refining influences of social life. To the eye of the world, there is a perfect symmetry in their moral developments. Quick are they in the apprehension of external duty, prompt in its performance. There is a perpetual sunshine about their walk. Under the influences of these moral graces, there is a proximate cultivation which may be tending to holiness. I do not say that of itself it ever will or ever can *secure* holiness. I do not deny that it often brings with it a self-confidence which is the very opposite of conviction for sin. I only mention it as one among the several influences, with which God may be moving upon the heart of the sinner, and putting him in the position most elevated in itself, and most favorable to conversion. At the same time it must be admitted that there is no unvarying uniformity in the divine operations, and that the spirit often impresses truth upon men of a very different character. We sometimes see the abandoned suddenly and in a moment rescued from the lowest depths of vice. The very flagrancy of the crime, the very awfulness of the blasphemy, the very solitude in which the criminal finds himself an outcast from society may be the means of awakening the horrors of conscience, and sending him a trembling penitent to the cross. The immoral man must not feel obliged to wait until he has corrected his moral

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habits and cultivated his tastes before he gives his heart to God, but he should be urged to shake off his vice and his impenitence together, and at once to become a Christian. Yet such a one could not be appropriately described as "not far from the kingdom of God." It is the greatest miracle of divine mercy that he is ever saved. The tendencies of his habits are all to put far off the period of his conversion. He is enervating his susceptibilities, and blunting his conscience, and barring up the avenues through which religion might enter his soul. If by divine grace such a brand is plucked from the burning, there is no moral proximity of his previous to his subsequent condition. Only to those can our text apply who are exercising their higher susceptibilities upon what there is of good in the objects of a virtuous life. To the man who is scrupulously living up to the relations of society, who sincerely designs to be a good father, a useful citizen, an honorable and benevolent man; who has a heart as warm and pure and kind as we sometimes see even in the unregenerate; to such a one can be most forcibly presented the importance of fidelity in his relations to God. He whose conscience is sensitive to violations of moral duty, and who makes rectitude and honor the rule of his outward conduct, might be expected to open his heart most readily to the reproofs of the divine law, and most promptly to cease from a career as base as it is sinful. Such a one may be said, so far as moral character is concerned, to be "not far from the kingdom of God."

Secondly, He is a believer in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

Morality presents little claim to the character described in our text, if it be joined with unbelief. That is enough to counteract all the good tendencies of amiable and virtuous life. Ordinarily faith and goodness, (I mean what the world calls goodness,) go hand in hand, and this is well for those who would establish the political expediency of correct be-

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lief. And yet as if to show what antagonist powers there are ever in human nature, the world has seen some splendid examples of private and public virtue conjoined with monstrous errors in religion. Such a one is very far from the kingdom of God. His susceptibilities may work right in their sphere, but the sphere is wrong. His conscience may be most accurate and regular in its action, but it is under the guidance of a perverted understanding, and supplied with inadequate data for its judgments. His moral system has lost its balance. The wheels move regularly, but wrong. If such a one is converted, it is because conscience will sometimes assert for the moment its supremacy over the understanding, and religion will press its way through some secret crevices to the heart, in spite of the mailed unbelief which invests it. If we sometimes see individuals denying some of the essential doctrines of Christianity until after their conversion, such cases are extremely rare, and all the previous probabilities are against them. Ordinarily we must believe before we are baptized with the Spirit. We are sanctified through the truth. Not that every mystery of religion is to be comprehended—not that every dogma of the schools is to be subscribed to—not that the most spiritual and elevated doctrines of our faith can ever be fully appreciated by the carnal heart. But it is demanded that there should be a speculative assent to all the fundamental truths of our religion—such truths as relate to the character and law of God, the nature and duty and destiny of the human soul, the redemption provided by Jesus Christ. And he who admits that he is a sinner, that his duty is to become holy, and that his only hope for pardon is in the merits of Jesus—such a one so far as religious opinion is concerned, is "not far from the kingdom of God."

Thirdly, He who is not far from the kingdom of God has a determination to become a Christian at some future time.

The cold assent of the understanding to the truths of reli-

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gion, may be given by one who is in fact very far from the kingdom of God. There are many men of exemplary morality and unexceptionable orthodoxy, who never dream of receiving any practical lessons from the doctrines of their faith. The truths they admit, do not go down into the depths of the soul, to awaken feeling, to stimulate to resolution, to gird for action. Particularly is this true of many intellectual sinners. They acknowledge the grandeur of our religious scheme, they bow down in speculative humility before the doctrines of the cross, they love to exercise their powers upon the great themes of the bible, but of a personal appeal to the heart from all this array of light they are never sensible. Practical religion, they imagine, will do well enough for the lower order of minds, but for themselves no melting entreaty ever sounds in their ears, "Seek ye my face," to which the soul responds, "thy face Lord will I seek." Neither can this description apply to that large class who cherish some vague and distinct hope of heaven, with no definite idea of the means of obtaining it; who cheat themselves with dreams of a reward while they think not of girding for the only effort which can secure it. To such characters our text has no application. They are like the man whom the pilgrim saw crossing the river of death in a ferry boat, instead of breasting its current, and feeling its dark waves pass over him. No angels meet him on the shore—no scroll is in his bosom—no gate opens at his knocking. But to those whom the doctrines of our religion approach with a personal appeal, to whom the cross gives a tender conscience, who feel constrained at times to follow in the way of duty, though it be with trembling hesitation, and who keep the eye steadily fixed on the strait gate with a determination to enter it before they die;—to such Christ comes with the address in our text. And such a one, so far as general purpose is concerned, is "not far from the kingdom of God."

Fourthly, He is diligent in using the means of grace.

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A distant and vague resolution, if it call for no immediate effort, is not enough to meet the description in the text. Nay, so far as it is prospective, it may be the very means of fixing the sinner in his condition of stupidity, and making procrastination the thief and the murderer of his eternal interests. But there are moments in the history of every sinner when the resolution just described assumes a definite form, and the claims of God press themselves with immediateness upon the soul. At such an hour sin looks terrible to the eye. The memory of past ingratitude and impenitence, and the consciousness of present guilt, sit brooding upon the soul, and at times weigh it down almost with the burden of despair. The long neglected bible becomes the chief companion, and there are lines of light upon all its pages, blazing in upon the conscience, kindling its terrors of retribution, or demanding the instant performance of duty. The house of God wears an aspect of sombre solemnity, and the voice of the preacher stirs up depths in the soul which have never before been reached. The Spirit of God is very near, and angels are watching for the result of the moral conflict. The sinner feels that the harvest season of his soul has arrived, and he is determined not to let it pass by unimproved. He prays with an agony of soul, lest the Spirit leave him to hardness of heart, and final reprobation. And such a one is in possession of the chief characteristic of an almost christian; and so far as the ordinary preliminaries of conversion are concerned, he is certainly "not far from the kingdom of God."

I have thus set before you, my friends, the traits which distinguish one who is "not far from the kingdom of God." He who is marked by only one of these qualities may be favorably situated so far as that one is concerned, but by the absence of others, the good influence may be counteracted, and he may be set with his face and his footsteps downward. Chiefly on him who combines all these characteristics would the Saviour turn his affectionate gaze, and to the moral, ortho-

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dox, sensitive, convicted sinner would address the language of the text. To such a one, most tender and affectionate should be our appeal. Our hearts yearn over him with peculiar fondness. We gaze with pleasure on his pure life, the faith he embraces is the light of our souls, we love to avail ourselves of a heart so open to the truth, and above all we rejoice that he seems in earnest for the salvation of his soul. Yet we rejoice with trembling. Not for worlds would we have him rush into a career of vice, or become the victim of error, or steel his heart against the personal appeals of the gospel, or relapse into his old stupidity and indifference. But we tremble for him, lest his promising position become the grave of his soul.

II. I proceed therefore to point out some errors and dangers incident to the condition described in the text.

First, This condition does not imply, as is often supposed, the commencement of holiness in the heart.

The error on this point is more frequently a practical than a speculative one. The line of distinction between the Christian, and the awakened, conscientious and outwardly obedient sinner, is to many minds exceedingly narrow. It seems hard to treat him like a miserable rebel against God. There is a disposition to mistake his seriousness and tenderness of spirit for the first breathings of true religion, to feel that his load of guilt is in part removed, that he is already within the threshold of the kingdom. But what is religion? Does it consist in fidelity to the obligations of social life, while the love of God is absent from the soul? Does it enthrone itself in the intellect to receive with a cold assent the truths of the gospel, while the heart sends back no beatings of sympathy for the holy theme? Does it waste itself in purposes of amendment, while sin still holds the life in its iron grasp? Or does it beat about in feverish exertions after holiness, and mad conflicts with the moral enemy, which only prove the desperateness of a long cherished depravity, and the depth of

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a still lingering fondness? No! religion lives not in one or all of these previous states. It acknowledges no fellowship with the virtue which can subsist in the depraved nature of man. It stands aloof from every moral exercise which would take it by the hand, and press it into unholy union with itself. It will accept of nothing short of an entire consecration to God. It will not divide the throne of the affections with any other claimant. Its mastery must be supreme or not at all. To him who is not yet its subject, whatever be his moral position, it comes only with the stern undeviating command, repent—turn—live. It has no preparatory services to enjoin, no walking in the way to the way which it can encourage. It knows no compromise or treaty with him who is "not far from the kingdom of God." Moral sinner, it comes to thee, stripping off the beautiful robe with which thou hast hidden thy deformity, and commanding thee to heal thy wounded heart. Believing sinner, it comes to thee, showing how superficial and empty is thy faith, and commanding thee to show thy faith by thy works. Resolving sinner, it has a voice for thee, ringing in thine ear the deathknell of thy hopes for the future, and bidding thee this instant, resolve and *do*. And for thee, convicted one, it has ten thousand voices of entreaty and alarm. They sound in thine ear amid the worship of the sanctuary, they break forth from hills and forests as thou walkest abroad among the speaking works of thy Father. In the retirement of the closet, they come swelling up in whispers of despair, and they startle thy slumbers in the visions of the night. Say, sinner, do they bring thee the language of comfort and complacency, as to one already at peace with God, or do they not hover with raven-wing about thy soul, as if determined to give thee no peace till thou hast done the great duty.

Secondly, This condition does not necessarily lead to true religion.

There are many who admit that these preparatory steps do

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not involve the elements of piety, yet imagine that they infallibly secure them. According to such, regeneration is a gradual change, involving a series of moral processes. He who steps within the magic range, although he is not supposed to be converted until he has crossed its utmost limit, is considered safe from the further accumulation of guilt, and sure of attaining the desired goal. Such persons seem to suppose that the more protracted the convictions, the more radical and thorough will be the conversion. They are suspicious of these sudden changes. They encourage the awakened sinner to press on perseveringly in the good way he has begun, and he may hope for light in the end. But what saith the scripture? "The word is nigh thee even in thy mouth and in thy heart." Our religion is one which calls for no pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre, for no long routine of forms and penances, for no imposition of holy hands, or external ordinances, before it can be received into the heart. Upon the conscience of every moral being, if it press at all, it presses this instant with its whole weight of obligation. And every sinner who lingers on the way, or hurries on without hurrying in, though his face be towards the house of refuge, is rendering his arrival more uncertain by each moment's delay. How can we encourage such a one as free from spiritual danger, when we know that he is a sinner against God? How can we hold out to him the certain prospect of pardon and salvation, when we know that life is not sure beyond the present moment, and should he be hurried unregenerate, though on the way to conversion, before the bar of his Maker, the bible furnishes no plea with regard to these indifferent acts,and assigns no compartment in heaven to the almost christian. How can we whisper peace to his anxiety, when we know that the last struggle in the moral nature is perhaps the most fearful of all, and that a thousand temptations to fatal delay or to obstinate relapse may be environing him. Satan rages, for his time is short—and who knows but that the principles of the

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old man inflamed in the conflict, may drag him back to hardened impenitence, and his last state shall become worse than the first.

Thirdly, The condition is one which involves peculiar guilt.

Guilt cannot be estimated absolutely. We have no right to measure by rule the sin of any man, or to compare mathematically the deserts of one condition of guilt with those of another. Yet we are authorized to draw out the peculiar circumstances of aggravation which accompany each case of iniquity, and we may say that in some respects one sinner is more culpable than another. One of our rules of moral judgment is, that blame is proportioned to the degree of light enjoyed by the criminal. Not that we exculpate the exasperated man, who commits a murder while his reason is deranged by passion, or that we place him on the whole in a lower gradation of wickedness than the assassin who proceeds deliberately to the deed of death. But we locate the chief guilt of the involuntary transgressor farther back, and we say that in the act itself the man who strikes coolly, while all the principles of his better nature are rallying for his rescue, overcomes more moral barriers in his way to ruin, and is so far a guiltier man. Just so is it in the case of the sinner. The awakened and anxious persist in impenitence amid clearer and stronger inducements to immediate rectitude, than they who are slumbering on in the lethargy of sin. We do not say that the moral man is absolutely more culpable and degraded than the vicious and abandoned. Far otherwise may be our belief; far otherwise may be the view of the all-seeing Judge. But inasmuch as in him, the gospel comes in contact with healthier sensibilities, with a nature acute in its perception of duty, with habits of prompt obedience, so far it is easier for him to comply with the demands of heaven, and so far it involves a greater sin, if he turn away from them with scorn and neglect. So too the believer of gospel truth may

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be far less degraded in his moral nature, and an object of greater complacency, than the votary of idolatrous and obscure rites, or the victim of an erroneous faith. Yet, against him there is this one plea of resisting greater light, and from the shrines of barbarous idolatry and the sanctuaries of a corrupted faith, there shall rise up multitudes to utter against him the fearful malediction, "You knew your duty, but you would not do it." And my hearers, I would not for a moment detract from the guilt of hardened and stupid impenitence, nor do I know of a condition more awful, than that of him who goes to the bar of God from the long unbroken slumbers of spiritual death. And yet there is one view in which the convicted sinner presents a spectacle more odious, and stands charged with higher criminality. He is in the midst of a flood of light which sends no rays into the prison house of the careless and secure. On his soul there beams new lustre from the throne of a forgiving Father. To his vision is revealed the cross of Christ, with a glory encircling it such as the world cannot behold, and the meek sufferer seems to fix on him an eye of peculiar fondness. Voices of unwonted eloquence blend themselves with the voice of his conscience, when the Spirit and the bride at this solemn hour whisper their persuasive invitation. Sin no longer wears its flattering and attractive garb. Hell sends in its notes of warning, and bids him seize the present instant. On which side soever he turns, he beholds a beckoning hand, and hears a beseeching voice. And yet he sins. He is an *awakened* sinner—but an awakened *sinner*. Oh! is not this guilt—is it not madness? Is it not an insult to the throne of grace, and the cross of Christ, that unveil to him their matchless splendors? Is it not a new thorn in the Saviour's crown, or a new nail in his hands and feet? Is it not a fighting against the gracious Spirit of God? Is it not a planting of the soul, in the midst of all that could allure or urge, only to show the desperate obstinacy of its sin, and to heap upon itself new measures of the wrath of God?

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Finally, The misery of those who perish from such a condition will be peculiarly great.

It has already been shown, that there is no security of a favorable result. On the contrary, there may be a relapse to impenitence, and death may overtake the sinner before he has found peace with God. Peculiarly embittered must be his recollections of the past, when he finds his gloomy account sealed up. If there be an hour of agony to the soul, it is when it calls up the successive steps of its own dark history, and finds how near it often was to the very highway of salvation. So close upon heaven—and still it is torn away with no prospect of restoration.

In one of the terrible calamities, lately occurring on our Northern waters, there was a man who perished in circumstances of peculiar aggravation. He had been long absent from his native land, and the home of his affection. For years he had been wrestling with dangers at a distance from those whom he loved. He had met death in the uproar of storm and shipwreck, but death had not claimed him for its victim. He had been caught in the hideous embrace of the pestilence, but he conquered there. Peril and disease chased after him in his journeyings, but a charm seemed to hang about his person, and he escaped scarred but vigorous. And now full of gratitude for his past deliverances, and buoyant with anticipations of a joyous meeting, he was hastening home from his long exile, to the friends that would glow more brightly at his return. But a fearful death was in reserve for him on the very threshold of his home. At an hour when he least thought of it, yet an hour so hemmed in by an all-wise Providence from every prospect of relief, and when the opposing elements seemed combined for the general destruction, he saw that he must die. As he sunk into the cold wave, and the torpor of death stole over him, his eye seemed to discern upon the neighboring shore, the glimmering of his own fireside, and he could almost hear the welcome voices of those

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who looked out at the lattice for his coming. Alas! it was a hard thing thus to perish, just as his arms were stretched out to embrace the long lost and almost recovered treasures of his heart. And, my friends, do you not suppose he would rather have found his grave in mid ocean, than on the very shores of his nativity? Would it not have been happier for him to sink down under lingering disease, so far away from the hearts that yearned over him that his last hours would have been haunted by no visions of their presence, than to lay his head on that icy pillow, while they whom he sought seemed to bend over him so closely, yet unable to smooth his rough bed, or to ease the pathway for his burial.

And so it is with the man who comes, like the prodigal, to the threshold of his paternal mansion, to the sight of his father's outstretched arms, only to linger and perish before he reaches the safe enclosure, or the forgiving embrace. He goes down to perdition with the songs of heaven sounding in his ears, and amid the visions of angels taking up their harps to joy over his repentance. Sad, sad indeed is the last farewell he bids to "the peace that passeth knowledge." And agonizing will be the reminiscence of that one spot in his moral history, where the influence of earth and heaven all combined to bring him to the very gate of paradise, while now he finds himself a more miserable outcast, in consequence of the elevation from which he falls.

And now, brother, thou to whom Christ addresses the language of the text, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." I wander not from the spirit of his affection, when I sound these warnings in thine ears. I mean it not unkindly when I tell thee,—Thou art not a Christian, and thou art not sure of becoming a Christian. New guilt is staining thy garment, and heart-rending will be thy doom unless it be speedily washed away. In Christ's stead, I stand here to-day to beseech thee without delay to become reconciled to God. In Christ's name, I assure thee of the fondness with which the

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church contemplates thy character and condition—not vile and odious, but moral and kind; not faithless, but believing; not cold and careless, but determined and anxious. She would cherish thy virtues, and confirm thy faith, and light up thy face with the smiles of hope. Yet it is for such as thee that the church weeps, and bows down in the dust, and can give herself no rest, in thy lingering delay. There is danger on every side of thee but one. If thou return to thine old sin, certain ruin yawns for thee, for if such as thou scarcely escape, what shall become of the hardened and the abandoned. If thou stand still, "sin lieth at the door," ready to rush in upon thy slumbers and bind thee with new chains. If thou press on in thy present strugglings, thou hast but found new avenues to death, and a new weight is accumulating on thy soul. There is but one way for thee, and that is—Repent. There is but one hope for thee, and that is the grace of God. "Oh! Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself—but in me is thy help." In Thee, blessed God is their help.

NOTE.

The preceding sermon, the fifth which Mr. Homer ever wrote, was the first which he ever preached. It was delivered at Sherburne, Mass. March 29, 1840; afterwards at Boston, Salem St. church; at South Berwick, May 17, 1840; at Dover, N. H.; at Danvers, Mass.; at Buffalo, N. Y.; and at Exeter, N. H.

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SERMON V.

FITNESS OF THE MEDIATOR TO BE THE JUDGE OF THE WORLD.

AND HATH GIVEN HIM AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE JUDGMENT ALSO, BECAUSE HE IS THE SON OF MAN.—John 5: 27.

THE phrase "Son of Man," here denotes the Messiahship of Jesus. It is a title borrowed from the circumstance of his humanity although not exclusively referring to that part of his nature. The Son of God was most fond of describing himself by this humble appellation, and it is remarkable that in the New Testament, it is used in this sense by no other person.

The scriptures very cleary predict that a day is coming when God shall judge the world; and they uniformly attribute to Christ the office of presiding on that august occasion. They speak of him as "ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." And our text states the reason of the divine appointment, "because he is the Son of Man." It will be the object of this discourse to develope more fully the idea of the text, and to show that

The office of the final judge is appropriated with peculiar fitness to the Messiah.

There are three great aspects in which Jesus the Messiah is presented to our view. He is God, he is man, he is God-

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man. The scriptures describe these qualities as distinct and perfect, and yet uniting in mysterious harmony in the same individual. He is represented as God. The *name* of the Supreme is attached to him under circumstances that admit of no qualification. The *works* ascribed to him are such as extorted from the Psalmist the devout acknowledgement—"Jehovah how excellent thy name in all the earth." The analysis of his *attributes* proves that he possesses qualities such as could be shared only by the Infinite and the Eternal. And all men are commanded to "honor the Son even as they honor the Father." He is represented as man. History, profane as well as sacred, has recorded his name as that of one who trode upon the earth, and wore the form and features and spoke the language of our nature. From infancy to manhood he grew up, his body and soul maturing together. He loved as a friend, as a brother, as a son; as a mortal he suffered and bled and died. Nor has he yet lost his human identity, for we are told that those who seek his glorified person shall discern in his scarred features the lineaments of his human history; and even in his spiritual body, "he bears about the marks of his dying." He is represented still further as not God merely, not man merely, but an inexplicable union of the two, by which mystery alone he discharged the functions of his high office. As a God he could not have suffered, as a man his suffering would have been no acceptable sacrifice. Only as he wrapped the mantle of his humanity about his incorruptible Godhead, was he fitted to stand forth as the Mediator and the Redeemer of man.

I propose to show that in each of these three respects, Christ is peculiarly fitted to judge the world at the last day.

I. He possesses in his *divine nature* qualities which fit him for the office. Let us consider how admirably his divine attributes are suited to the judicial function such as we see it among men.

In an earthly judge, we look for uncommon attainments in

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wisdom and knowledge. We require that he should be one who has thoroughly mastered the principles of human law, and traced their varied application. We expect in him an acute insight into the nature and character of man, so that he may weigh testimony in an even balance, and estimate guilt with a discriminating judgment.

Accordingly we dignify with the judicial ermine chiefly such as have attained a great age, and have spent years in the study of books and of men. But how much more important are all these qualities to the Judge of the universe. Broad and deep as eternity are the principles of that law, which is in the statute-book of the great day of account. Not only are the splendid acts of men to be brought to light, such as might be established by the evidence of a thousand witnesses; but with impartial scrutiny the small and the great are to be gathered around the same bar, the secret thoughts that lay secluded in the bosom shall receive sentence with that which has been published upon the housetop. The whole history of the world, including the minutest details of each individual's experience, is to be crowded into that single day. The long agitated questions in morals are then to be decided; and to each act is to be attributed its appropriate character, and adjudged its fit award. Where could venerable experience be found like the wisdom of Him who existed before all history, and from eternity has fixed his calm eye on the long and crowded future, as if it were the present moment. Who could be better qualified for the great office, than he who holds in his hands the books of judgment; of whom it was said, that "he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man;" and who has said of himself, "I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts."

Another most important requisite of an earthly judge, is undeviating integrity. He should be one who not only knows, but adheres to the law, loving it with the affection of a most docile pupil, jealous of the slightest infringement of

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its claims, uniform in his quickness to discern and to punish crime. He should not be one whose interpretation of the statute or infliction of the penalty varies with every shifting circumstance. He must be proof against the most shining bribe—unmoved amid the torrents of prejudice or the warm appeals of affection. Wedded should he be to the law, constant in his attachment to it, firm and manly in his vindication and enforcement of it. Still more important is this unvarying firmness in the judge of the universe. The influences of hell combine themselves to jar the scales of justice in his hands, and from many a surprised criminal, there is a cry for mercy while the finger of justice is pointing to his doom. Who could stand in such a scene, so like a rock, as he who has been called "the same, yesterday, to-day and forever;" and who has sat enthroned above the shifting currents of time, the still, calm I AM. His infinite spirit can be ruffled by no outward agitation, and his views are ever as clear as his purposes are just. Immutable in his perfections, he is the fittest representative of that law which is itself forever unchanged.

Still better qualified is the judge for his station, if he is possessed of great power, either in his own person or in the government which he serves. Weak and empty would be the spectacle afforded, if he should assume his high place, and send forth his oracular decisions, with no ability to enforce a compliance or inflict a penalty. Such a judgment-seat would be a laughing-stock. Vice would stalk abroad fearlessly to its work of devastation, and would brave the venerable reprover on his very bench. Virtue would retire to weep in secret places over the inefficiency of its vindication. And law, unable to sustain its majesty or life, without the nerved arm to execute as well as the sagacity and acumen to expound, would put on sackcloth and ashes, or go down from its mock throne to a living sepulchre. How would the judge of the earth appear, if there were no power in his kindling

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eye to make the wicked obey his mandate—depart. But of him we are assured that "he is able, by his mighty working, to subdue all things unto himself." The powers that throng around that tribunal for their last conflict shall be sadly overcome. "He holds in his hands the keys of death and of hell," and he is fitted to pronounce the doom of the ungodly, because he has omnipotence to execute the sentence.

Mercy is another most important attribute in the character of a judge. An unkind and cruel man would take delight in pushing the law to a needless rigor; he would close his eyes to the palliating circumstances of the crime, and he would not hear that mild injunction which even the law in all its sternness puts forth,—Better is it that the guilty escape, than the innocent suffer. Our conception of the character would be greatly heightened, if the judge were one who often endured great sacrifices in his own person, that he might extricate the unfortunate from embarrassment. And we have this quality most beautifully prominent in our great and final judge. It is divine love that sits on the awful seat of judgment. I speak not now of the love of human sympathy, but love as it wells up in the Infinite Spirit, and sends out its streams to gladden and refresh the universe. Divine love it was which suggested the great plan of redemption. And it is fit, that he who was selected from all eternity to be the peculiar development of this blessed attribute, in whom the love of Jehovah was to array itself in its brightest smiles, and welcome to its most affectionate embrace, should be employed at last to execute that law which is founded on love, and of which the sternest features are but needful expressions of the same unceasing benevolence.

From these considerations how appropriate does it seem that a God should judge the world, and not an angel or a man. Angels are fitted only to be the attendants and spectators of the stupendous scene. Men are but the judged. To Jehovah only could the history of the world be spread out as

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upon a map. He alone is worthy to be the vindicator of the immutable law. He only can enforce and execute the dreadful sentence. He only could be trusted as mingling kindness and mercy, with the strictness and severity of his decisions. Before such as He, with the dignity and majesty of the infinite and supreme, heaven and hell may bow in humble adoration, and "all the nations of the earth wail because of him." Verily Jehovah himself is on the throne of judgment. None but a God could produce that fearful dissolving of the elements,

> "When shriveling like a parched scroll,
> The flaming heavens together roll."

None but a God could summon around him the sleepers from their graves,

> "When louder yet and yet more dread,
> Swells the high trump that wakes the dead."

II. Christ possesses in his *human nature* qualities which fit him for the office of judge.

Certainly, if we were assured that God himself were our judge, none could for a moment gainsay or resist. The assurance of his infinite perfections would be a pledge of the justness of his awards. And if our own doom on the day of account were made known to us in some mysterious and unusual way, every mouth would be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God. Yet there is something more required than a cold assent of the understanding to abstract and invisible correctness. As we need the incarnate Deity to bring the divine glory to a level with our comprehension and sympathy, so we need the incarnate judge to influence us with a power more personal and direct, to bring to the very door of our consciences the processes of the great day, and to make us feel their reality, as well as acknowledge their truth.

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Christ will in his humanity be revealed to our bodily senses. We are not to be caught up in the air to have our sentence impressed upon us in some strange and supernatural manner; we are to see it written on the lineament of a human face—a face marred by the toils and sorrows of a life like our own; we are to hear it pronounced by a human voice, now "like the sound of many waters," yet identical with that which once uttered the words of meek entreaty, or of lowly prayer. No doubt the form of the man Jesus will be arrayed in new loveliness, and assume a lustre surpassing that of earth, yet will it retain to a wonderful degree the marks of its servitude in our nature, and we shall gaze on it with an intimacy such as we could not feel for the "face of angels," or the unclouded majesty of the Invisible. Especially shall we discern the marks of his crucifixion—the wounds in his hands and feet. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." "His countenance," says one, "shall be most mild and peaceable towards the good, and though the same, most terrible towards the bad: out of his sacred wounds shall issue beams of light, toward the just, full of love and sweetness, but unto sinners full of fire and wrath, who shall weep bitterly for the evils which issue from them."

"Some,
They who polluted with offences come,
Behold him as the king
Of terrors, black of aspect, red of eye,
Reflecting back upon the sinful mind
Heightened with vengeance and with wrath divine,
Its own inborn deformity.
But to the righteous spirit how benign
His awful countenance,
Where tempering justice with parental love,
Goodness and heavenly grace,
And sweetest mercy shine."

Another circumstance of his humanity, is the fact that he

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has himself been a subject of the law according to which he judges. He is not taken like a foreigner from some distant province of Jehovah's empire, to administer and execute the law of an unknown region, but he is one that heard its mandates in his own ear, and felt its power upon his own life. Nor has he been a subject merely of this government, he has been an obedient subject. The paths of piety which he now commends, he himself once trod; and the sins he punishes, he himself once wrestled with and conquered. Not as an angel, my brethren, did our judge walk among us with a nature too elevated to be touched by the corruptions of earth. As a man he lived, frail and feeble, with a thousand avenues for sin opening into his soul, and the devil watching his opportunity and assailing him in his hours of bodily and spiritual exhaustion, and yet he lived pure. Not a stain defaced that human soul, not one note of discord disturbed the moral harmony of that life. Verily as he was fit for our high priest in that he was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin, so he is fit to be our judge, in that he can say in the presence of assembled nations around his bar,—I was the subject of this law. Principalities and powers and a frail humanity conspired to make me disloyal in my allegiance, but I was faithful unto death.

Another circumstance which renders it fit that a fellow-man should be our judge, is the sympathy he would feel for the joys and woes of the gathered multitude around his bar. He does not invite the blessed to his own inheritance as a cold desert of justice, but rejoices in their exultation. He does not drive the wicked into hell, as one who cares not for their fate, if so be the law is glorified. No stoical sternness will darken the brow of our judge. He is our brother, not only related to us by ties of fellow humanity, but the most affectionate and kind of our great family; he it is who during his abode in our nature exhibited a benevolence so expansive, that it crossed the earth, and gathered the past and the future

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in its warm embrace; and there shall not be one among the assembled millions so mean and obscure that he cannot look up into the face of the judge and say, he loved *me* with more than a brother's affection. And how fit is it, that he whose bosom beat for the whole human race should be exalted at last to be their judge. My hearers, have you ever been in court, when sentence of death was pronounced against a criminal. As you fixed your eye on the cold rugged visage of the condemned, and marked his unmoved posture, and his iron mien, you doubted if a human heart could be beating there. Perhaps a quick flush passed over his features, as the word of death reached his ear, and then all was calm and cold again. But when you gazed on the streaming eyes of the judge, and saw his venerable frame agitated and quivering under the awful responsibility of his mission; when you heard the choked ejaculation, "May God Almighty have mercy on your soul," you felt that there was new power in the law, shining through the tears of a man, and speaking in his tremulous voice. Just so will it be with our final Judge. The sympathies of humanity shall be conspicuous even in his severest maledictions. The joy of a man swells in his bosom at each act of faith and penitence he reads in the record of his chosen, and his voice sings for gladness at each new welcome to the right hand of his Father. And those who go away forever from his presence, shall remember the fraternal tones with which he pronounced their doom; and amid the dark lonely caverns of their exile, no sound is sadder than that which follows the soul from the judgment scene—"He that did eat bread with me has lifted up his heel against me."

There is yet another thought connected with this part of our subject. Our Saviour has in one place made known to us the principle on which the award of justice is to be made. Most intimately is it connected with his own humanity. It shows that he is enabled in his demand for service, to appeal

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to the tastes and sympathies of men; and, as he was himself a man, what he chiefly requires seems to be, that we should cherish and exhibit a love for those whom he died to save, as bearing his own image, and being his own substitutes and representatives. My brethren, each cup of cold water you furnish to a disciple in the name of Christ, he looks upon, as an act of kindness to himself, and feels that from you he should have received only tenderness and love when he was on the same lonely pilgrimage. And when, abashed by the eloquence with which he shall recount your services to himself, you are ready to exclaim, "Lord when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink," the answer of the Judge shall be, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

III. In the work of redemption, Christ has given the highest possible proof of his regard for the law.

There is a most intimate relation between the cross of Christ and the law of God. If Christ came merely as an instructor to reform and renovate the human character, why was it necessary for him to die? If his death was only an example of martyrdom for the truth, why did he not give a model of cheerful and joyous suffering? No, brethren, there was an object higher than all this which brought the Son of God to earth, and made him willing to tread the portals of the tomb. It was that man might be reconciled to God, that the barrier which sin had reared between the creature and the Creator, might become as if it had not been. The bosom that yearned for the salvation of the guilty, was yet unwilling that guilt should escape with no mark of the vengeance of God. Justice appeared to contend with love in that mighty soul. On the one hand, he saw that the repentance and sanctification which his own gospel might secure, could not wash away the stain of past offences, nor would he insult the law by inflicting a partial and finite punishment for an offence

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that in some of its relations was infinite. On the other hand, his heart longed to gather the children of men ransomed and forgiven about the throne of a smiling Father. There was but one way in which love could gratify its promptings, and yet justice feel that no insult had been offered to its majesty. On me, he said, on me, let the full penalty be executed. Let me be held up as a spectacle for the universe of the displeasure of God against sin. Let the intensity of suffering, with which my innocent, sensitive nature is lacerated, be enough to atone for the sins of a world, and be substituted for their deserved punishment. Law shall sheath its glittering sword, and stand by smiling and contented, while a voice from the infinite throne proclaims, Whosoever cometh to me, though mountains of guilt weigh upon his soul, will he but look to the cross of Christ, he shall in no wise be cast out.

I know there are many who pretend that this view of a vicarious atonement has in it something shocking to the sensibilities. An effeminate theology is pressing its claims upon our faith, which leaves no room for the inflexible justice of God. The cross of Christ indeed is not a favorite, as it was not a product of human wisdom. To the theologians of the synagogue it was a stumbling-block. To the philosophers of the Academy it was foolishness; and in our own day, peradventure, to some who are saved, it looks more like the figment of a savage and cruel faith, than the wisdom and power of God unto salvation. To such as doubt the satisfaction of divine justice, and the connection between the law and the cross, we need but unfold the plain story of the gospel, and ask them to explain it on any other principle if they can. We would lead them to Gethsemane, and point them to the mysterious agony which there brooded on the spirit of Jesus. What was there in that fearful cup, from which one who had braved every danger, and given himself voluntarily to his great work, should be ready almost to shrink. What was there in the anticipation of mere physical suffering, to agitate

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his frame so deeply, that in the damp air of that chilly evening the perspiration should fall in clots to the ground. And amid the tortures of the cross, irritating indeed to the nerves and fibres of a man—but what would they have been to an unclouded spirit, with the sweet memories of an innocent and benevolent life, thronging in smiles over its departure, and holding up the speedy fruition of its brightest hopes forever. Women have been known to suffer greater physical agonies for the truth, and with exultation and joy have gazed amid their suffering upon the benignant face of Jehovah. But from him, the prince of peace and comfort to all his followers, a voice was heard speaking not of the rapture of his expiring spirit, but of its forlornness and gloom. No! my brethren, while we bow weeping before the cross of Christ as a development of the love that "many waters could not quench," while we behold in the pangs of the sufferer, the yearnings of compassion for a guilty race, let us behold in it also, an awful, mysterious development of another, sterner attribute. Let us bow adoring before eternal right as it establishes its throne on Calvary. Amid those affecting scenes, let us discern the arm of the law, in the garden holding up its iron scroll, on the cross driving the nails and agitating the spirit, asserting its claims in the quaking earth and the opened graves more loudly than amid the thunderings of Sinai, and in those awful words, "it is finished," proclaiming that its demand of obedience and penalty is satisfied in the innocent suffering of the second Adam of our race. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And what dignity will belong to him when he comes to administer the law, which he has thus triumphantly vindicated from reproach and injustice. Surely it is fit that he who hung on the cross as a representative of the law, should be now entrusted with its authority in the great day of final adjudication.

In view of this subject, I remark,

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First, The mediatorial office must relinquish its proffers to the impenitent, when the judicial office is assumed.

All legal analogies force us to this idea. The earthly judge never disgraces his ermine, by assuming upon the bench the part of an advocate. They who would retain his counsel exclusively for their own defence, must avail themselves of it before he assumes the judicial function, or his learning and sagacity must be shared also by their adversaries. "To the law and the testimony," is the motto of the judge, and in his high seat he can listen to no personal appeal; he knows not his brother from his enemy, he forgets himself. So speaks the uniform tenor of scripture upon this subject. "When the Son of God appears in his glory and the holy angels with him," he is described as no longer pleading with the impenitent, but as pronouncing against them his final sentence. At the hour of judgment, the office of mercy and of grace will have consummated its purposes for the faithful, but for the finally obdurate its efficiency must cease, and after that period there is no cross to which the agonized sinner can cling as the anchor of his hope. Faith in Christ, if it be not exercised before, can then be of no avail. Sad truth is it for thee, lingering one, that the face of Jesus will not always be lighted up with hope for the sinful, neither will his voice forever whisper its invitations of mercy, and its promises of pardon. The day will come when his countenance shall be as lightning, and "his words like seven thunders uttering their voices." Oh! secure the counsel of the affectionate Advocate while thou art in the way with him, lest thou be called to meet him as thy frowning Judge.

Secondly, The person of the Judge will remind the righteous of their dependence on grace rather than merit for salvation.

Where is there one among the blessed who could submit his character and history to the searching test of the All-seeing? Where is there one who would dare to meet the stern

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demand of the law on that dreadful day, and stand forth on his own deserts to claim the reward? Can he point to a summit of perfection, to which after toils and struggles he at length attained, with a spirit exhausted and worn out in the conflict? Or if that were itself a possible ground of merit, can he unfold the scroll of his history, and find from its earliest dawn no stain defiling it? Ah! how many deeds committed in the darkness and solitude of midnight would blaze out there to the eye of the impartial Judge! How many thoughts cherished in the secrecy of the bosom, while the eye sent forth pious glances, and the voice spoke of heaven! But now on the disclosed tablet of the heart, they are as legible to the Judge, as if the point of a diamond had marked them. No! brethren, legally and rightfully we cannot claim exemption from wo, much less the blessedness of an unfading crown. When we meet the eye of the Judge, there is little in its penetrating gaze that can speak comfort to us. When we look to the immutable law, which he stands pledged to support, we can but cry, guilty, guilty, with our hands upon our mouths. Only in the divine mercy do we find the ark of our refuge. It is the sympathy of the brother, "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," to which we make our appeal. More than all, it is the victory over the law, it is the great vicarious sacrifice for sin as we see it pictured forth in the scarred visage of our Judge, that inspires our trembling spirits with hope. "Even the most innocent person," says Jeremy Taylor, "hath great need of mercy, and he that hath the greatest cause of confidence, although he runs to no rocks to hide him, yet he runs to the protection of the cross, and hides himself under the shadow of the divine mercies." And we, my brethren, when we enter into that joy to which our Judge shall welcome us, shall enter only among the ransomed and blood-bought; and our song shall be,—"Not unto us, not unto us, oh Thou who art our Saviour and our Judge, but unto thy name be all the glory."

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Thirdly, Most terrible must it be to be condemned by such a Judge.

"The whole world," says one of the Fathers, "shall groan when the Judge comes to give his sentence, tribe and tribe shall knock their sides together, and through the naked breasts of the most mighty kings you shall see their hearts beat with fearful tremblings." And, my friends, the guilty, who are cast away in indignation, will find in each attribute of the Judge something to aggravate their doom. It is the unerring decision of the All-wise, who cannot be deceived as to the character, and who knoweth the desert of each criminal at his bar. It is the sentence of him who holds the scales of justice with an impartial hand, and administers a law that is holy and just and good. It is the stern decree of one who has but to speak the word, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever. But more subduing than all, it is the wrath of Divine Love under which they sink, and through the frowns of present displeasure, they discern the compassion that is "not willing that any should perish." Verily the divine perfection as it shines forth in the person of the Judge is such that every hope of escape is shut up, and every rebellious thought silenced forever.

Still more will the humanity of Jesus aggravate the misery of the condemned. He stands forth in the example of his perfect obedience, to show them that they might have obeyed. He rises up as the representative of their repeated violations of the law of love,—"Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me." It is the condemnation of a sympathizing brother. Sad as it might be to sink under the wrath of an infinite monarch, it will be gloomier still, when the sinner must say, It was thou, a man, mine equal, my familiar friend, but I did force thee to become my reproving Judge.

But it will be the redemption of Jesus, as it speaks forth from the wounded body, and the pierced hand that points to

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the sinner's doom, it will be the redemption of Jesus which will make that cup of wo most bitter. If there is one expression in the bible where all that is awful is concentrated, it is in those words,—"the wrath of the Lamb." If there is one prediction which might drive the expectant sinner to a pillow of thorns, and a couch of agony, it is—"They shall look on him whom they have pierced." As a God, they cannot escape his searching gaze, or shake his firm justice, or overthrow his invincible power, or contradict his everlasting love. As a man, they shall see that he condemns them with all the stirrings of a brother's heart. As a Saviour, "they shall look on him whom they have pierced," and it will be the bitterness of that wrath under which they sink, that it is the wrath of a bleeding Lamb.

An old divine in describing the scene has gathered a singularly imposing group around the bar of Judgment. "Not only will the Redeemer be there to confound the sinner—not only will conscience call up the slighted love, and cry out against the base ingratitude—not only will the guilty themselves hang their heads and smite upon their breasts, and cast fearful glances at the face of the Lamb, but the fallen spirits will be there joining to judge and condemn those whom they claim for their future victims. And the burden of their reproof shall be, that from him who died to save, the reprobate can claim no mercy for themselves. "Cannot the Accuser," he continues, "truly say to the Judge concerning such persons, they were thine by creation, but mine by their own choice: thou didst redeem them indeed, but they sold themselves to me for a trifle, or for an unsatisfying interest; thou diedst for them, but they obeyed my commandments: I gave them nothing. I promised them nothing, but the pleasures of a night, or the joys of madness, or the delights of a disease: I never hanged upon the cross three long hours for them, nor endured the labors of a poor life thirty-three years together

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for their interest: only when they were thine by the merit of thy death, they quickly became mine by the demerit of their ingratitude; and when thou hadst clothed their soul with thy robe, and adorned them by thy graces, we stripped them naked as their shame, and only put on a robe of darkness, and they thought themselves secure and went dancing to their grave, like a drunkard to a fight, or a fly unto a candle: and therefore they that did partake with us in our faults must divide with us in our portion and fearful interest."

NOTE.

This discourse was preached first at Boston, Salem-street church; afterwards at South Berwick, May 17, 1840; at Dover, N. H.; Boston, Park-street church; Durham, N. H.; Andover, Mass. Theological Chapel; Danvers, Mass.; Dedham, Mass.; Salem, Mass. Crombie-street church; Charlestown, Mass.; Buffalo, N. Y.; Newark, N. J.; Rochester, N. H.

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SERMON VI.

JESUS OUR MASTER, TEACHER, EXAMPLE AND REFUGE.

TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU, AND LEARN OF ME: FOR I AM MEEK AND LOWLY IN HEART: AND YE SHALL FIND REST UNTO YOUR SOULS.—Matt. 11: 29.

THESE words occur in one of those bursts of tenderness and compassion which abound in the instructions of our Saviour. He had just been describing his own mysterious connection with the Father, when suddenly the wants of the weary and wretched seem to rush upon his view, and he utters that memorable invitation to all that labor and are heavy laden: Come unto me and I will give you rest. From the desolations of human nature, the desolations that sin had caused, his eye turned back upon himself, as the destined and ordained Redeemer from that spiritual bondage;—as the fountain to whom the sin-worn and world-weary should repair, and find refreshment and joy to their souls. And his direction is in the words of our text, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

The passage invites us, my brethren, to look upon Christ in four several aspects:

I. As a master, in the services he enjoins: "Take my yoke upon you."

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II. As a teacher: "Learn of me."

III. As an example: "I am meek and lowly in heart."

IV. As a refuge from sorrow and sin: "Ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Let us consider Christ in these several characters, and see whether he is not properly set up as the standard around whom all should gather; as he who is fitted to secure the highest elevation and happiness of the human soul.

I. Let us consider Christ as our master, in the services he enjoins upon his children; for he says, "Take my yoke upon you."

Now we are so constituted, my brethren, that what we chiefly require for the full development of our powers, is constant and unremitted exertion. The soul needs active exercise for its health. There is no more melancholy spectacle than a spiritual being wasting his days in idleness, sleeping while other men wake, or retiring oyster-like to his cell to see the current of action pass on, and be himself motionless, stupid. We invariably predict for such a one disease, or premature decay; for we know that there is a law of our system, broad as are its various compartments, and applying alike to physical and spiritual and mental culture. He that will not work, neither shall he eat. And only the man who lives a life of vigor, who commissions his faculties and powers to works of toil—only *he* can reap in the end the pleasant fruits of a laboriously exercised and symmetrically cultivated nature.

Still more important is it that we should be disciplined in the course of holy action. We find ourselves created under a law, to do what is wrong. It is not a law which forces us, for we are free to do what is right, if we would. But it is figuratively styled a law, because somehow or other the results are invariably the same. We always do wrong, until we come under a new and spiritual law, the law of grace, and even then we are harassed by perpetual struggles, and

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have to undergo the fearful conflict that Paul did, when he saw the law in his members warring against the law in his mind. And sometimes we cry out with him: "Wretched men that we are!" Now what we most need is something that shall inspire us with fixed purposes of holy action; action so high and ennobling that it cannot fail to secure its own perpetuity; action which shall preoccupy the powers which might be devoted to sin—that when temptation comes, though it be in her most fascinating garb, and her most alluring smile, we can look down on her from our lofty engagements, and turn our backs in scorn.

There is a still higher good secured, if this labor be in the path of difficulty and self-denial. It is true everywhere, that nothing great can be attained without toil and hazard. And it is peculiarly true of greatness of soul, that it is acquired only by those who press their way to it through suffering. The man whom the pilgrim saw on his way to the palace, had to enter cutting and hacking his path through grim warriors, that stood there to bar up the gateway; but he heard in his struggle a pleasant voice from those within, even those that walked on the top of the palace. And every man who wishes to acquire true nobleness and loftiness of spirit, must reach it through the pathway of suffering, in the midst of fightings without, and fears within; but he shall be cheered by sweet voices from his own soul, that shall seem sometimes like the music of heaven.

Now Christ in his qualities as a master, in the services he enjoins, meets just these demands of the soul. He asks for labor. There is not a faculty of our nature to which he does not make his appeal, and which he does not call into active exercise. There is not a power we possess, which he does not command us to devote to his service, and which may not be useful in his cause. Now where could be found a purer atmosphere of action, or healthier exercise for the soul, or a more beautiful development of our whole system, than if we

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should submit ourselves to the control and direction of such a master?

He calls us too into a course of *holy* action. He points out to us the glory of God, and the good of our fellow men as the chief objects of exertion. He enjoins upon us a pure and spiritual worship. He leads us in the path of benevolence. He makes life one great field of labor, where we may be incessantly occupied for God and for souls. And he enforces these labors by the highest motives which ever speak to the human bosom, attachment to his own person, gratitude for his death, the hope of sharing his inheritance. And, my brethren, if we could but fix our eye on this master, standing by us continually, encouraging us in our work by all the power of his own memory and the hope of our eternal reward, should we ever wish to lay down our armor. Could we think for a moment of preferring the service of the world to the service of Jesus.

Still more he calls us into the pathway of self-denial. It is a *yoke* which we are commanded to take upon us. First of all we must subdue this world-craving nature of ours. We must bring every idolatry to which we are clinging into subjection to the law of this great master. The passions that would draw us off into a career of self-gratification, we must gather under this yoke. Humiliating, mortifying position as it is, we must put ourselves, our whole souls there, and be governed by our divine guide. It is elsewhere called a cross. We must bear about with us that emblem of suffering in memory of our atoning high-priest, and in memory of the self-crucifying spirit he would have us cherish. We must count all things but loss, that we may win his approving smile. We must be willing to face the frowns of the world, and to preach the gospel to those who would scorn or abuse us. And, my brethren, what loftiness would be imparted to our character, if we were ready to look suffering and danger in the face in the service of our master—called not now in-

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deed to follow him to prison and to death, but called to a daily crucifixion of our idols—to the wounds of a sensitive spirit, and to hear Christ's instructive voice in the afflictions and sorrows and vexations of life. Oh! what elevation might we have, if we gazed on all as the cross we were to bear, and bear cheerfully for the sake of Jesus, and cherished in our hearts the sentiment of that ancient saint, "When we rise, the cross—when we lie down, the cross—when we go out and when we come in, the cross—at all times and in all places, the cross shining more glorious than the sun."

II. Let us now proceed to consider Christ as our teacher, for he says, "Learn of me."

The soul of man needs a divinely inspired instructor. Rich as are the lessons hung up in its own secret chambers, they are read too often with a dim eye, or a bewildered gaze, and man shows his ignorance by the false interpretation of his own nature. And then when in proud self-confidence and trusting only to his own inward light, he walks abroad in the pathway of spiritual discovery, how sad and how fatal have been his wanderings, and it is only when the fatigued and famished spirit will sit down at the feet of Jesus that it will find refreshment and food. Yea, man needs a teacher who will renovate the heart, as well as furnish the intellect, and send them both together in holy fellowship to the work of self-cultivation. And such a teacher is Christ. He touches the moral affections of his pupils, and makes that love the basis of his superstructure of doctrine.

The world has seen many great men, my brethren, under whose instructions you and I would have loved to sit. But take the philosophic sages of heathen antiquity who could blend nothing Christ-like with their lessons, because the oracles of the New Testament had not yet been uttered, and to them the finger of prophecy had not pointed out the future guide, and how lifeless appear their lessons compared with his who brought life and immortality to light. When we see

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how their minds struggled for the truth, and contrast the feebleness of their attainments with the mightiness of their endeavors, we are reminded of

> "Eyes that rolled in vain to catch the piercing ray
> But found no dawn."

And we most beautifully recur to our own teacher, when we remember that the greatest sentiment which Socrates ever uttered, was that in which, forced by a sense of ignorance to the unconscious prophecy, he speaks of looking forward to a divine teacher who shall one day appear to reveal the mysteries of truth, and make its dark places plain.

Go to the inspired teachers, and you find that they live and breathe in the fullness of their blessed master. The poetry of the Old Testament never glows so brightly, as when it speaks of the Shiloh that is to come,—of the grace that is poured into his lips,—of the spirit of wisdom which shall encircle him. And the lessons of apostolic wisdom never appear so rich, as when they name the name of Jesus, and breathe his spirit, and seem but new embodiments of the accents which fell from his lips.

Was there ever a system of morality, more comprehensive and yet more spiritual, than the sermon on the mount? Did the great law of love ever speak with a clearer power to the soul of man? And throughout that ministry, how varied the form and yet how unaltered the spirit of the truths inculcated. More than any man he blended the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove; uttering many a brief maxim, which contains volumes of meaning, and attracts the long study of the greatest of minds, and yet so simple that a child can understand it; now withering an opposer with his gentle sarcasm, now overpowering him with his just rebuke, now winning him by his benignant invitation; now clearly unfolding a hard doctrine, now inculcating a soul stirring rule of action, now breathing a whisper of par-

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don and peace; yet ever the same—full of meaning, and purity and love. Jesus, we will choose thee for our teacher, for in thy light we shall see light. Wandering for moral lessons among the teachings of earth, we do but tire our vexed spirits, and blind our dim vision. We come back to thee. With new delight would we bend over thy pages. With child-like docility would we sit down at thy feet. Oh! teach us, guide us, enrich us with thine own wisdom, exalt us at last to the new and higher teachings of heaven.

III. Let us proceed to consider Christ as an example, for he points to his own character as the chief source of instruction when he says, "I am meek and lowly in heart."

He stands out in all history as the solitary instance of a spotless human being. What the soul craves most in companionship, is the personation of moral and mental perfections. But every thinking man knows that such a treasure cannot be found. There is not one to whom I speak who has not noticed this particular in his own experience. When you have fixed upon some one person as possessing all the most admirable qualities of character, and presenting to your view a most harmonious picture, how invariably has a closer acquaintance or a minuter inspection revealed some foibles to your view, not indeed to diminish your love, but to make you weep in secret places over the imperfection of your nature. You have read of that ancient sculptor Phidias. On a certain occasion he was commanded to mould a statue of Jupiter, which should excel in the beauty of its proportions all his former works. At the set time he brought forth an image, which seemed as he was carrying it through the streets, so ungainly in aspect, and so awkward in posture, that the disappointed populace had well nigh torn him to pieces. But the artist begged them to wait till he had placed it on its lofty pedestal; and then in the enchantment which distance lent to the view, it stood forth with such dignity and beauty and grace, that the people shouted that Phidias was himself a

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god. And I have known some men, who on the same principle have shrunk from an intimacy with their fellows, from a morbid fear of discovering their deficiences. But I would rather they should make a different use of their sense of human frailty. I would rather it should lead them to reflect how the human character must appear to the eye of God, when it shuns even the scrutiny of man. I would rather it should gather all men around Jesus, as the great and the only spectacle of perfect humanity—as able to satisfy every longing of the soul.

There is a thought touched upon by some recent writers on this subject, to which I cannot help alluding. It presents the fitness of Christ for a universal example, from the fact that his traits of character are, so to speak, universal rather than individual or national. His virtues are not virtues arrayed in the costume of his race or his line. He was not a Jew, but a man. In this respect he differs from every other great man, and from every other illustrious example that ever lived. They are all the peculiar property of some peculiar clime or age, and they cannot of course speak with equal power to those at a distance from their home or their period. Not so is it with Christ. He did not assume the exclusive bigotry of the Jew, the formality of the pharisee, or the pedantry of the scribe; but he took his stand above the level of Judaism and its various phases, on the broad, noble basis of humanity. And now through these simple features he speaks to men of every clime and every age. Alike the king and his vassal will hear his fraternal voice. His image shines in the abodes of refinement or the hovel of poverty. The Bramin of India, and the Mohammedan of Persia, and the native savage of our own wilds, come up from their widely severed spheres of idolatry and all unite in recognizing in this one character the lineaments of a brother.

And, my brethren, to us who have adopted him as our spiritual brother, shall not his gentle example—the meekness

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and lowliness of his heart—shall they not speak with a power that shall subdue our own lives to a delightful fellowship. And when called to face affliction and trial, shall we not be exalted and comforted, by thinking over the paths of trial which he trod, and imitate his spirit of meek submission till we imagine ourselves in the very footsteps of his sorrow? And when called to tread the fiery pathway of temptation, let us think of the wilderness, and the garden, and the cross; let us remember that though he wrestled as a man, he conquered, and that we shall hear his voice saying to us, Be of good cheer, I have overcome, and I will give you the victory; and that voice shall be to us, as was the ministering of angels to the famished Jesus. There is a beautiful story of an eastern king, who was journeying one cold winter's night in company with his servant. The servant from fatigue and cold sunk down, and had well nigh perished in the snow. But when his master missed him, he turned back and bade him rise, and be of good cheer, and be careful to walk directly behind him, and put his feet exactly in his own footsteps in the snow. And the servant did so, keeping in the path through the snow which his master's feet were making, and he went on rejoicingly, and fainted no more. And, my brethren, it is so with us. When we wander away from the path of our Lord's example, we shall faint and die. But let us keep steadily in his footsteps, and we shall be strong.

IV. Let us briefly consider Christ, in the last place, as our refuge from sorrow and sin; for he holds it out as a reward for our service, and obedience, and imitation,—"Ye shall find rest to your souls."

And the soul of man needs such rest. Oh there are seasons when desolation like a whirlwind sweeps over us, and the agonizing question of the stricken spirit is, "whither shall I flee for a refuge." Adversity tears from us our choicest treasures; and we are left in the world with that insufferable sense of loneliness, which makes us feel though

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we are in the midst of a crowd that we are fearfully alone. And how blessed is the heart which can look up to Jesus at such an hour, with the peaceful and happy exclamation, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee."

But it is chiefly as a refuge from sin, that we are called to contemplate our Saviour, on this interesting occasion. Those are indeed hours of bitterness, when the soul wakes up to the consciousness of its own past ingratitude and neglect; and the dark waves of despair seem to roll over it. And from the pangs of remorse, and the angry eye of God, and the gulph that yawns for the convicted one, there is but one place of escape, and that is the cross of Christ. In the sacred wounds, in the streaming blood, in the despairing visage, we behold our own refuge. In the voice of agony, we hear the sentence of our own peace.

In a discourse which I once heard, and which I can now quote only from memory, the preacher gathered around the scene of the crucifixion the company of those whom Jesus had benefited by his miracles of mercy. These all throng about the cross, to pacify his sorrow, by reminding him how rich in benefits had been his life. The widow of Nain brings thither her son restored to the freshness of life, from the very gateway of burial. Demoniacs whom he had relieved sit down among the holy women clothed and in their right minds. The blind are there, gazing with moistened eyes on him who had brought light into the chambers of their darkness. There Lazarus and his sisters look up with affection in every feature, and speak with grateful voice of the mourning he had turned to joy. There Jairus leads in his blooming daughter, and the newly wedded pair of Cana come to grace the halls of his memory with their festive offering. These all wait upon the lonely sufferer as he hangs suspended between heaven and earth. They would bring peace to his despairing spirit. They would bring balm to his wounded soul. "But when he had

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tasted thereof, he would not drink. And he cried, it is finished, and gave up the ghost." And, my brethren, why was it that he could find no peace in those pleasant recollections —that he could read no comfort in those grateful faces. It was because the burden of our sins was upon him. And he found in that fearful hour no rest for himself, that he might say unto us; "in me, in me ye shall find rest unto your souls."

And now, beloved, Christ has called you to a new sacramental feast. With new delight will you not come, and contemplate him as your master, as your teacher, as your example, as your refuge? Shall it not be, that you will come forgetting the things that are behind, with their depressions and discords and sins, and come up to the table in holy fellowship with each other and your common Lord? Will you not come to take upon you anew his yoke, to learn new lessons of wisdom from his lips, to have new light shed upon the pathway in which he trod, and to press to your heart with new affection his blessed promises. Behold him in the elements of his body and his blood, as your master, and take up the cross, and bear it with a spirit of self-devotion and fidelity through life. Listen to him in the bread and the cup, as a teacher—reminding you of your guilt, and calling you to gratitude and love. Behold him in that affecting picture of disinterested suffering, as an example of lofty benevolence; and be willing as he laid down his life for you, to lay down your lives also for one another. But above all let us gaze on him as a refuge—a rest for our souls; rest amid the wanderings of earth; rest in the dark hour of despair; rest amid the agonies of death; rest at his own right hand in heaven.

NOTE.

This sermon was preached at South Berwick, May 1840; afterwards at South Boston, New Market, N. H., and Dover, N. H.

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SERMON VII.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A MAN FOR HIS INFLUENCE OVER OTHERS.

AND THE LORD SAID UNTO CAIN, WHERE IS ABEL THY BROTHER? AND HE SAID, I KNOW NOT: AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER? AND HE SAID, WHAT HAST THOU DONE? THE VOICE OF THY BROTHER'S BLOOD CRIETH UNTO ME FROM THE GROUND.—Gen. 4 : 9, 10.

I HAVE selected this familiar passage, to lay before you some thoughts on the duties we owe to each other. God comes to the murderer, and demands of him an account respecting his brother. The guilty man tries to throw off the responsibility. But he cannot escape the all-searching eye of Jehovah, or the voice that cries from the ground for vengeance. By a very easy accommodation we can apply the passage to that account which God calls every man to render respecting the condition of his fellow-man. The text naturally suggests a three-fold division of the subject.

I. God has a right to call men to account for the condition of their fellow-creatures: "Where is thy brother?"

II. Men are disposed to deny this accountability, chiefly in reference to moral and religious influence: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

III. God certainly will call men to account for the influence they exert upon others: "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

I. God has a right to call men to account for the condition

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of their fellow-creatures. To each one of us it is perfectly proper that he should come this evening with the solemn interrogatory, "Where is thy brother?" There is not an individual present who has not the destinies of fellow-beings in some measure committed to his trust; who may not have been operating, by something that he has done this very day, upon others who live a thousand miles from this place, or who may not live till a thousand years from this time.

I think this will be evident if we consider,

First, The structure of man as a social being. We naturally shun solitude. The sympathies of our nature all lead us to fly to one another. They prompt us not only to secure our own interests, but to seek out some other being to love, and shelter, in our warm embrace, from evil. One who secludes himself from his fellows, and lives in the wilderness, in solitary independence of everything except the wild productions of nature, is looked upon as a moral anomaly; and even he cannot escape the searching question, "Where is thy brother?" For as he tries to shut himself out from all fellowship, he is accountable for that very seclusion; and he who neglects his brother may be as guilty, as he who does his brother wrong.

Society is founded upon this principle of mutual dependence. And the way we test the progress of society, is by examining how far its different classes assume the position of mutual aid. The poor depend upon the rich, and the rich depend upon the poor. One branch of industry is supported by another. The tradesman is dependent on the youngest apprentice whom he supplies with food and raiment. If the smallest wheel in the great system were to move irregularly, the disorder would be felt at the centre of operations; and should the hand say to the foot, I have no need of thee, the world would stand still and refuse to stir, until harmony could be restored among the discordant members. Every man who feels conscious of having injured his neighbor, recognizes

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the justice of that law which calls him to account for the wrong. And it is the voice of God speaking through the ordinance of man, in the words of our text, "Where is thy brother?"

Secondly, We shall be still more fully convinced of the justice of this demand of God, if we consider the nature of human influence. The voice of man stirs up depths in the soul of his fellow-man, which nothing else can reach. And the silent example often speaks with an eloquence, which no language could exhibit. It is probable that we never converse with a fellow-being without carrying away certain thoughts or impressions from the interview, which afterwards make a part of our mental furniture. In my own observation I have noticed this remarkable fact. When a sensitive scholar has been cherishing in secret some favorite opinion, and at length meets a friend who opposes him, and an earnest discussion ensues; unless the scholar can bring his friend to an agreement with him upon the spot, he often goes away with misgivings about the correctness of his own theory. He may have felt that he conquered his friend in argument, but is still discomposed by the thought that an intelligent spirit cannot agree with him, and he is at last compelled to retrace his steps, and modify if not abandon his theory. And occasionally it is found that this same friend has been undergoing a similar process in his own mind, and chiefly by the power of mental sympathy has come to adopt the views of the scholar, so that the two disputants are almost prepared to exchange ground, and fight the battle over again. There is a story told of two brothers by the name of Reynolds, who lived in England, in the seventeenth century. One was a protestant, and the other a catholic. Both fond of each other, and each anxious to convert the other to his own belief. They appointed a day for discussion. They met and canvassed the subject of their respective religions, and the result was that the protestant became a catholic, and

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the catholic became a protestant, and each remained so till his dying day. Now this was no force of argument, but simply the power of one human soul over another. And, my friends, could the pages of our long inward history be brought to us, as clearly as we shall read them by the force of that plenary memory with which we are one day to be endowed, should we not find that there is built up on our separate individuality a superstructure from the thoughts of others. That first whisper of maternal tenderness which we heard in infancy, when it ceased to vibrate on the ear, did not cease to vibrate on the heart. The playmates of our childhood may have contributed impulses which have grown up into all-absorbing passions. And onward, all the way through life, we have been gathering up these impressions, and there lives and thinks and acts in us the crowd of living, thinking, acting beings through which we have been hurried.

There is another thought connected with this influence over each other. It is eternal. It cannot cease with life. It sometimes speaks from the grave with a power that it did not possess before. The memory of the dead forces their influence upon us with a charm that we cannot resist. But that influence lives also, after the power that communicated its first impulses is silent, in the lives of those who felt it, and who in turn will transmit it to successive generations down to the end of time. We, my friends, live among the ruins of a once mighty people, who were buried upon the very ground where we now stand. Now and then we dig up their bones. But where are their bodies? And where is the dust of the fathers of that race? Decomposed to its original elements, it has gone to nurture the earth that sustains our life, and it floats around us in the air we breathe. And we ourselves in time shall return to our mother earth, to enrich its resources, and to bear our share in maturing its future sons. And have you never thought that our souls live also on the dead. That the thoughts cherished, and the words uttered years ago, by those

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whom the hand of God has linked in with our destiny, are supplying our minds and our language; that the influence you have exerted to-day over your brother, will speak through him to his children and his children's children. As you have read of that eastern fable of the transmigration of souls, has it not seemed to you that there may be such a transmigration of influence. Do you not feel, that the spirit of a remote ancestor may this day, in one sense be looking out at your eyes, and speaking in your voice, and you yourselves in turn, by the ever-living power of your influence, may stand one day in the station and whisper in the ear of a remote descendant. And has not God a right to demand of you, hedged in as you are by such circumstances, able to move neither to the right hand nor to the left as a solitary being, endowed with the privilege of improving this power for the good of your fellows, for long ages in this life and eternal ages in the life to come —Oh! has he not the right to demand an account of such a stewardship, of such a talent, as he does, when with solemn earnestness he puts the question, "Man where is thy brother?"

II. I now pass to remark that men are disposed to deny this accountability, chiefly in reference to moral and religious influence. With regard to worldly concerns, they are proud to acknowledge their power over each other; they make it their boast. And the more low the station, the more insignificant the agent, the more exulting is the thought, that he can make even the lofty and the powerful feel their dependence upon him. But go to such a one, and ask him what he has done for the souls of his fellow-men; whether he has ever communicated one spiritual truth; whether there has been a religious power speaking forth from his life; whether in short the world is any better for his living in it; and he will start from you with surprise, and the language you read in his perturbed countenance is, "Am I my brother's keeper?"—I, but a private citizen, but an humble member

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of society, comparatively poor in knowledge and property and talent? Go to the princes of the earth, go to those who have been officially entrusted with the concerns of their fellow-men, go to the ministers of the gospel, who watch for souls as they that must give account, but come not to me. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

One of the reasons why men are so prone to deny this religious accountability is, that they are most conscious of a deficiency here. Cain knew that he had been guilty of the murder of his brother, and he thought it a very sagacious mode of self-vindication to deny all responsibility in the matter. If conscience had but held back the arm that he lifted that morning against his brother, and forced him to a kind embrace rather than a murderous blow, he would not have met the searching question with such an answer. With a clear open front, he would have stood up in the presence of Jehovah, and pointed to the mild one still laying his flocks upon the altar of sacrifice. And, my brethren, it is the same with us. We live forgetful of our high calling as religious beings. When we pass a fellow-creature in the street, when we gather our children about us in the family, when we are engaged in business intercourse, we seldom look upon those whom the providence of God has gathered around us, as creatures destined to immortality, and as capable of receiving an impression from us, which may make that an immortality of joy. And when God comes to us, with this solemn inquiry concerning our brother, we are so conscious of entire forgetfulness, or of absolute guilt, that we try to shake off all sense of obligation, and deny the rightfulness of his appeal. Not so would it be, if we cherished the constant sense of our power, and determined to exercise it for God. If our daily prayer was that he would enable us to live for others as well as ourselves, if we went forth to our duties with spirits sanctified and elevated by this prayer, if every word and act breathed forth the energy of this noble purpose, and we made men feel

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that we were in love with souls; then, when our Lord should come to urge upon us the solemn and searching inquiry, with joy should we go forth to meet him at his coming, and our answer would be, Lord here are we, and those whom thou hast committed to our spiritual guardianship.

Another of the reasons for this denial of accountability for our religious influence, is that we are disposed practically to deny the omniscience of God. So was it with Cain. Foolish man! In the confusion of his embarrassment, he forgot that he was proclaiming his innocence in the ear of him, who would take his hurried disclaimer as the strongest evidence of guilt. For the moment he forgot that an eye had been upon him all that day; that it looked in upon the first impulses of his passionate heart; that it watched the fearful struggle that was going on there,—an eye from which he could not escape, though he sought his victim in seclusion from the gaze of men, but which blazed in upon that deed of darkness, and counted every drop of innocent blood, and followed the murderer home, and fixed its calm clear glance upon him when he was called to his account. Oh! could he have remembered the character of him before whom he stood, he would not have added such madness and folly to his guilt, but would have stood speechless with terror, or have prostrated himself in humble confession for his crime.

And we, my friends, how often are we inclined to attribute our own short-sightedness to God. Because we cannot follow the consequences of our own acts, because we cannot look in upon the soul of another, and defeat the impression we have made, because we cannot trace with unerring finger the progress from heart to heart and from age to age, we are prone to imagine that he who summons us to our account is equally ignorant. Oh! could we realize that to him the small and the great are all the same, and each compartment in his moral system has a firm place in his memory, and every act however trivial he traces to its remotest results, our

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humble confession would be, we are verily guilty concerning our brother. And if we could bear about with us through life the thought of that all-seeing eye, we should sympathize with it in its watchful anxiety, lest the susceptible natures which are so easily moved, should by our influence be moved wrong.

III. I proceed to remark that God certainly will call men to account for the influence they exert upon others.

The justice and impartiality of his law require this. He should vindicate the constitution he has established. If he has united men so indissolubly, that they become, as it were, a part of each other, he who knows how to analyze the moral commixture, must call each one to answer for his separate portion of guilt. And throughout the universe of God, there cannot be one so obscure and mean, that no notice is taken of the share he communicates, and the share he receives of influence. If corruption go forth from his silent and secret abode, but to taint the atmosphere which other men breathe, the consistency of the divine law requires that it should be brought forth to view, and forced back in judgment upon the source to which it is traced. Or if corruption *enter*, though it be but from the breath of a passing traveler, yet the voice of the poor man's blood cries from the ground, and it will one day deepen into the tones of Jehovah coming to the door of the criminal's heart, with the startling inquiry, Where is that brother whom thou hast injured! The bible is full of assurances upon this solemn subject. The great principle upon which Christianity is founded, is that of love to our neighbor. He who hides his talents in a napkin cannot escape the censure or the doom of an unprofitable servant. There is no denunciation more awful, than that which is uttered against him by whom offences come, though it be to the little ones of Christ's flock. And in the great unfolding of the judgment scene, we are told that this is to be the subject of the trial. The question proposed to each individual

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around that final bar will be, What hast thou done for thy brother? And if his spiritual nature was famishing, or exposed to corruption and disease, and thou didst not put forth thy hand, to extend to him the food of the word, or to point him to the great physician, or to draw him into the ark of safety; but didst rather set before him the unwholesome sustenance of a bad example, and didst leave him to perish in nakedness within his dark damp prison house of sin,—then shall the Judge answer and say, Depart from me; for I was an hungered and athirst, sick and in prison, and ye gave me no aid.

Our moral nature will respond more readily to no retribution, than to that which we suffer for the neglect or the perversion of our influence. And it will be the bitterness of our doom in another world, that we shall be surrounded by those who, but for us, would not have come to that place of torment.

My christian brethren, let me close this discourse with one word of appeal to you. Do you consider that no man liveth for himself, and no man dieth for himself? Through life, each moral act sets in train its kindred actions in the hearts of others, and every new act awakened into being has the same power of perpetuating and multiplying itself. The evil that men do lives after them, and while they slumber in their graves, it may be possessing all the power of its first impulse. My brother, you not only possess within you as a human being the elements of an extensive, a never ending power, but as a Christian, you possess it to an unusual degree. You are like a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. Men look upon you as the representative of goodness, as the imitator of Jesus; and from you the unspiritual and the worldly will judge, what is religion, and who is Christ. Will you not then solemnly put to yourselves the question this evening, whether you are living worthily of this exalted eminence; whether the world are taking courage from your inconsistent

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example to go on in sin; whether the members of Christ's body derive warmth and refreshment from their communion with you, and go from your presence with new views of the preciousness of their faith. Are you living as if the church to which you belong leaned upon you? Are you strenuous in your endeavors to increase its spirituality, and to multiply its energies? Can you point to a soul for whose conversion you are laboring and praying with a faith and zeal that will not tire and faint? Do you cultivate a missionary spirit, whereby in your own person or that of others, you may reach the desolate neighborhoods, the wildernesses of Zion around you? Above all do you watch with a godly jealousy over your own daily conduct and converse, determined that they shall speak with an eloquence indirect, unostentatious, inoffensive, but powerful upon all who witness them? Do you associate with men of the world, as one impelled by higher purposes, and cheered by brighter hopes, and subsisting on more celestial food? Does religion beam from your eye, does it animate your countenance, does it breathe in all your actions, like a living reality rather than a cold dead profession? My brethren, what we do must be done quickly. When we are in our graves, not we but ours shall be working. We shall be silent, but our influence will be living and speaking still. Then we cannot recall the idle word, or the sinful act, which may be moving on in its career of mischief. But now while it is called to-day, if we do but rouse ourselves, we may redeem the past, we may check the circulation of our own sins, we may wake up to the consciousness of who we are, where we are, and what we can do. God shall be glorified, and souls saved, and Zion rejoice in the efficiency of her sons. And when we reach our heavenly abode, like a long track of light and beauty shall we follow the blessed influence in its eternal work.

My friends, let us all consider how fearfully and wonderfully we are made, and that it becomes us to walk softly in a

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universe, where one step to the right or the left may be fraught with consequences so stupendous. Let us lean on God, who alone can save us from incurring the awful guilt of abusing this precious talent, and ruining the souls of men.

NOTE.

"This sermon," says an intimate friend of Mr. Homer, "he regarded as a mere extemporaneous effusion, without any particular form or finish. It was esteemed by his hearers, however, as one of his most effective discourses."—He ordinarily preached it as an evening lecture. It was delivered at South Berwick, May 8, 1840; afterwards at Dover, N. H., South Boston, Portsmouth, N. H., Newmarket N. H., Danvers, Mass., Buffalo, N. Y., Rochester, N. H., and Great Falls, N. H.

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SERMON VIII.

CHARACTER OF PONTIUS PILATE.

AND PILATE GAVE SENTENCE THAT IT SHOULD BE AS THEY REQUIRED.
Luke 23: 24.

THERE is an air of veritable narrative about the New Testament, which distinguishes it from all other religious books. Its scenes and characters are many of them a part of general as well as sacred history. We look into the records of other religions, and we find that the beings and events they treat of are altogether of a supernatural character, and such, that as men and as historians we cannot sympathize with them. Even the Old Testament relates to a people peculiar and secluded, and as the incidents and persons it brings to our view are seldom recorded in the annals of classical literature, they often lack the breathing form of historical realities. But the New Testament marks the era of the blending of sacred with secular history, of the connection of the Jews with the civilized world, the world with which Livy and Tacitus have made us familiar; and this second revelation introduces us to the society of common life; we recognize as old acquaintances the characters and laws and customs brought to our view; with the group of martyrs and apostles there sometimes mingle the iron features of the Roman soldier, and our faith is appealed to with a directness and intimacy, which the

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purely religious narrative could never acquire. It is a mark of peculiar wisdom, that the most momentous event which the bible records, is brought home to us from the tribunal of a well known Roman Procurator, and depicted in the familiar forms of a Roman scourge and cross.

The character and history of Pontius Pilate are not fully given in the gospels. But if we examine the secular traditions in connection with the inspired narrative, they cannot fail to throw light upon each other. The accounts of the trial of Jesus seem to present the governor, as characterized by general weakness of principle rather than strongly-marked depravity. But the record of his administration in profane history is stained with every atrocity. Philo describes him as a man of obstinate temper and imperturbable arrogance, and speaks of the wantonness with which he condemned the innocent, and the cruelty with which he executed the laws. Incidents are related by the several historians of the period which confirm this description. On one occasion he shocked the religious feelings of the Jews, by introducing triumphal images of Cæsar into the holy city, and even provoked the emperor to a rebuke. At another time he appropriated the sacred treasure to defray the expenses of an aqueduct to Jerusalem, and when the people were assembled to complain of the outrage, he let loose upon them his soldiers arrayed in the common costume, like so many blood-hounds to follow up and chastise every breathing of rebellion. To those stern features which became him as the representative of the Roman government, he seems to have added a natural love for cruelty, and that intense hatred of the Jews which had already began to hunt down the persons and the customs of that ill-fated race.

Such was the man selected by the enemies of Jesus, to consummate their own infamous proceedings. His ordinary residence was at Caesarea, but he had come up to Jerusalem at this time of the Passover, to hold a criminal court, as well

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as to suppress any tumult which might rise amid the vast gathering, and the religious excitements of that noted festival. There were various reasons which may at this time have induced the Sanhedrim to transfer their criminal to the Roman judicatory. The power of inflicting capital punishment had been already removed from their hands, and although they need not have feared a strict enforcement of the regulation, they wished the punishment to be more ignominious and cruel than it was their own custom to inflict. They felt moreover secret misgivings of the flagrancy of their conduct, and they wished to throw off the responsibility of the final issue upon one whose hardened conscience could bear the weight. And they may have feared, that the fickle populace would frustrate their designs by some premature change of opinion, or that, after the victim had fallen, the buried affections of the multitude would rise up and call for vengeance on the persecutors. Agitated by a consciousness of wrong and terrified by a foreboding of judgment, they gladly sought refuge and aid in the very power which was their dread and hatred; and they felt safe in the coöperation of a government proverbial for its recklessness of human life, swift and savage enough to gratify their own insatiate cruelty, strong enough to silence every whisper of opposition, and wicked enough to make this outrage appear like a small drop in an ocean of crime.

It was at about five o'clock on Friday morning, soon after the hour of sunrise, when they hurried away from the scene of their own nefarious trial in the high-priest's court yard to the palace of Herod, where Pilate was then residing. They were a group of strongly marked figures. They wore the despairing aspect of the last men of a noble race. The dignity of the old prophet was not there, neither did the faithful waiting for the promises light up those features with the smiles of hope. They walked along that dolorous path like the ghosts of ancient greatness. The ruins of the Mosaic

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law seemed to totter in their steps. It was as if they were going to their own execution. The hour of their degeneracy had arrived, and this morning it might be read in pale faces, and eyes bloodshot and strained from the sleepless and exciting night, and the curled lip that betokened uneasy malice. Yet they are eminently conscientious men, and in all the eagerness of their errand to the Pretorium, they will not venture within the heathenish enclosure, lest they become unfit to eat the passover. Praiseworthy punctiliousness! They had just forgotten the once fondly cherished "annise and cummin," in their heated disobedience to "the weightier matters of the law," for "to condemn the just," they had held the council by night, and consulted on a capital crime at the period of the festival; but now with the foolish inconsistency of uneasy, conscience smitten criminals, they stop at the threshold. "Woe to you," exclaims an old divine, "Woe to you, priests, scribes, elders, hypocrites! can there be any roof so unclean as that of your own breasts? Not Pilate's walls, but your hearts are impure. Is murder your errand, and do ye stick at a local infection? God shall smite you, ye whited walls. Do ye long to be stained with blood, with the blood of God? and do ye fear to be defiled with the touch of Pilate's pavement? Doth so small a gnat stick in your throat, while ye swallow such a camel of flagitious wickedness? Go out of yourselves, ye false dissemblers, if ye would not be unclean."

As it was the policy of the Roman tribunal to humor such prejudices, the governor came forth to meet them in the open air. The area which he occupied during the trial was somewhat elevated, and overlaid with a tesselated stone pavement. Upon this was placed the seat of judgment, one of those small painted pieces of marble which the Roman magistrates carried with them on their journeys. Thus he sat, surrounded by the accusers and the multitude, while Jesus was left bound and guarded in the porch. The parley began, "What accu-

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sation do you bring against the man?" There was an expression of firmness and force in this first question of Pilate, which surprised and intimidated the accusers. They had supposed he would condemn without a hearing. Many a time, had they seen him exult over the sufferings of the innocent, and they knew that he reveled in scenes of blood. But now with his lips pressed together, and with the attitude and mien of a man who meant to weigh the case and to do what was right, he comes forward and demands a fair trial. This was one of those days when the good Spirit was near to the governor. His savage nature seemed softened by the divine presence. He had heard of Jesus, and his conscience reproved him that he had already taken sides with the persecutors, and commissioned his soldiers to aid the band that apprehended him. And now a meek look from the prisoner as he had passed from his presence, spoke so serenely of innocence, that the heart of the Roman was touched with a tenderness that had not warmed it before. What is the accusation that you bring? But the accusers saw their plans thwarted; they read a reflection of their own guilt in the justice of this unjust judge; and it was with the petulance of mortified and baffled and remorseful men, that they smartly replied, "If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him unto thee." We, the patterns of morality and religion, so marvelously strict that we will not cross your polluted threshold—and can you, the representative of heathen Rome, the blood-stained governor, the merciless judge, can such as you question our justice? Remorse inflamed their suspicions, and disappointment roused their impudence. Irritated at this contempt of court, but awed by the determined feelings which prompted it, Pilate mingles in his answer a latent sarcasm, with his first attempt to throw off from himself the responsibility of what seemed inevitable. "Take ye him and judge him according to your law." Punish him yourselves if you can, as for me, I will have no concern in it.

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He felt the power which that mass of opposition would not fail to gain over him. With that foresight which often accompanies conscious weakness, he read his own ruin in the maddened faces of the crowd. But in that very acknowledgement of imbecility, in that very effort to run away from the struggle to which his better nature called him, he loosened the ground on which he was standing, he threw away those latent energies which he might have summoned for a glorious conflict, and a glorious victory of right. "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law."

Yet the enemies of Jesus, as with downcast eyes, they replied that their law was unavailing, plainly saw that the judge was not to be trifled with. Having collected their thoughts from the first surprise at their reception, they looked about for data, with which to prosecute the case. What now must they do, in this novel and unexpected position. It was hard work to condemn their victim even before a Jewish court, what must it be before the stern and impartial scrutiny of a Roman tribunal. It was very evident that the blasphemy and sacrilege at which the president of the Sanhedrim had seemed on the evening previous so piously enraged, would have little effect on the mind of a heathen judge. They must devise some charge gross enough for him to appreciate, and one too which will appeal to his national prejudices and his selfish interests. They accordingly present an accusation of which nothing at all had been said on the former trial, and with which as Jews they could have no concern, except as the cringing informers of the government that oppressed them; an accustion therefore as mean as it was palpably false—that he had set himself up as king, and commanded to be appropriated to his own use, the tribute that was due to Caesar. Most sensitive would the governor be to such a charge, for the provincial revenue was the chief object of his official guardianship, and the source of his emolument. He felt as has been said, "his own freehold now touched,"—"it was

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time for him to stir." Accordingly he withdrew to the apartment where Jesus had been confined, and put to him the question with a mingled expression of alarm and pity: "Art *thou* the king of the Jews?" And here it is, that the superficial character of his opinions, and the general weakness of his spirit most clearly manifest themselves. The prisoner in assenting to the title, explains the spiritual and harmless nature of his kingdom, and his high destiny as a maintainer of the truth. But all this was beyond the governor's comprehension. He had heard of the learned discussions of the Sophists, of the kingdom ascribed by the Stoics to their great men, and like a true soldier he disdained what was mystical. He felt its political harmlessness, but he did not see its moral force. To his eye it was a figment of idle scholasticism. "What is truth?" is the careless half-jesting question with which he met the spiritual mystery. Oh! had he but paused for an answer, had he lingered to gain the truth as it is in Jesus, he would not have gone back to be tossed about at the will of a rabble, he would have carried with him a talisman potent against every temptation. Pilate, thou dost bear with thee the truth, though a sneer is on thy visage, but ah! thou art destined to become its weak minister; for when its fountain-head was opened to thee, thou didst turn coldly away.

When Pilate returns to the multitude in the open court, it is to proclaim aloud the innocence of Jesus. But ever-suggestive malice is prepared to renew the conflict. Instantly the charge takes a new form—that he had been guilty of stirring up the people to sedition, making Galilee the chief seat of disturbances. The inhabitants of Galilee were distinguished for a love of liberty, which theoretically took the form of a theocracy. They had moreover rendered themselves peculiarly obnoxious to Pilate, as we read that on a certain occasion he had mingled their blood with their sacrifices. How plausible and ingenious then was this new accusation at the bar of the judge, and how must he appear to the govern-

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ment at home, as the already indignant populace will represent him, if he acquit the man accused by his own nation as treacherous. He remembers the old reproof of the emperor, and he feels his dependence on the good feelings of the Jews. But stop! "beginning at Galilee"—instantly a new thought occurs to the perplexed governor. To the jurisdiction of Herod the prisoner appropriately belongs. He will send him to the Tetrarch. There was his second parley with conscience. Another barrier of his moral nature is torn away. Weaker and weaker becomes the principle of justice. Slowly but surely press on the mob, as they see the governor yielding inch by inch. Pilate must fall.

Herod was now occupying another part of the same palace where Pilate was quartered. He was a weak-minded man, as he had shown himself in beheading John to please a giddy girl. He received Christ as if he were a juggler. He treated him like a buffoon, and finally sent him back to the apartment of Pilate, arrayed in the worn out habiliments of his own royalty, but clearing him from every charge of guilt. And all that the governor gains from this miserable subterfuge, is the termination of his long quarrel with Herod. What a spectacle when the King of kings becomes the involuntary arbiter between these rival and petty powers.

What now shall the governor do? He has made friends with Herod, but not with conscience or the Jews. The dilemma is again upon him. The priests and elders stand before him with hungry eyes. The stern monitor worries him for another effort to release the prisoner. Added to the monitions from within, are the soft beseechings of affectionate alarm from without. The wife of Pilate had accompanied him to Palestine, and was now with him at Jerusalem. This was contrary to the provincial laws of the Roman government, but the peculiar fondness of this woman had probably occasioned a special indulgence in the case of Pilate. In the brief and solitary mention made of her, she seems like a good

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angel in the group of the blood-thirsty and the halting. She had heard from some female companion the story of Jesus, and by that power of sympathy with which his person and character seem uniformly to have affected her sex, her mind became intensely excited. Anxiety for his fate made her dreams feverish and frightful, and the glimpse she had of his grief-worn countenance as he passed along from Herod's hall, recalled to her memory, and invested with new and terrible meaning the visions of her sleep. With prophetic eye she sees the fearful doom that overhangs her own family, and the imploring word she sends in to her husband is, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man." Along with that voice of tenderness, comes the old charge from the maddened Jews, that the prisoner had styled himself the Son of God. "And when Pilate heard that, he was the more afraid." The Roman faith in dreams, and a superstitious fear that perchance some god of his own mythology might be standing at his bar, now added force and energy to the appeals of conscience. He is roused to another effort for the innocent, but ah! how imbecile, how suicidal. It was a custom of the Roman government, to secure popular favor, by occasionally releasing prisoners, and the Jewish law seemed to point to the passover as the appropriate season for this act of clemency. There was another Jesus now at Pilate's bar—a man hateful for every atrocity—Barabbas, or Jesus the son of Abbas. He will let them choose between the two. Surely the mild and gentle one will have greater claims on their compassion, and they will cry out with one voice for his rescue. But oh! weak governor, dost thou not see that in this miserable subterfuge, thou hast yielded the two great points in the controversy, and sealed the fate of the man thou wouldst fain save. Who ever heard of release or pardon for one on trial, and uncondemned? Thou hast admitted in this very proposal, all that the insatiate priests have thirsted for, that Jesus is guilty. Thou dost not distinguish between him and the robber who bears

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his name. Thou dost give up thine own right of judgment, the only hope of the innocent, to a prejudiced and infuriate rabble; and canst thou wonder at the mad shout that bursts back upon thee? "Not this man but Barabbas." Where now is thy conscience, and the dream and warning of thy wife, and thy own sagacious plans. Pilate, there is but one step more for thee to take.

And that step the governor is not long in taking. Foolish man! in the confusion of his embarrassment, he fancied there might be compassion in the bosoms before him, and to that he would make one touching appeal. "I will therefore chastise him and let him go." And accordingly Jesus is handed over to the ruthless soldiers, and his garments are stripped off, and his tender flesh exposed to that horrible whip under which many a hardy Roman soldier had perished. And when he is led forth again to the pavement where his enemies are standing, it is with his limbs lacerated and bleeding, his face disfigured and swollen, his bosom heaving with the feverish excitement with which his whole system was agitated—and over all, were gathered the insignia of mock royalty, pressing with thorns his bleeding forehead, or half covering with military garb his wounded body. Pilate saith unto them, "Behold the man!" Those words and that scene have become immortal. Painters have dipped their pencils in that purple robe, and sought for ages to depict that expression of suffering royalty. The church of God caught up the motto and the image, and pressed them to her bosom. But those, before whom they stood in the power and freshness of life, who gazed on the streaming wounds, and heard from cruelty herself a pitying voice, "Behold the man," looked sternly and coldly upon the scene. "Yea and behold him well," exclaims bishop Hall, "behold him well, O thou proud Pilate! O ye cruel soldiers! O ye insatiable Jews! Ye see him base, whom ye shall see glorious; the time shall surely come, wherein ye shall see him in another dress. He shall

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shine, whom ye now see to bleed; his crown can not be now so ignominious and painful as it shall be once majestical and precious."

Alas for Pilate, he knew not what he did. There are some beasts of prey whom the scent or the sight of blood will madden with such ferocity, that the appetite must be glutted or there can be no peace. The sight of the scourge on this occasion seems to have inflamed rather than appeased the thirst for vengeance; and there was one dreadful thought which it suggested. In the succession of Roman punishment, scourging was the invariable preliminary of crucifixion; and now, they who have seen the prelude must behold the terrible catastrophe. "Behold the man"—but the shout which meets that exclamation of pity is, "Crucify him," "Crucify him"—and with that stern demand, there are voices of warning which reach the ear of the appalled governor. "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend"—"Away with him—Crucify him." Pilate thine hour has come. Tardy has been the process but sure. Thy spiritual doom is now consummated. The struggle is over. Thy weak nature has no more subterfuges to suggest. Conscience will not again lift her voice to be trifled with. Henceforth thou art shattered, bedridden, the wreck of thy former manhood.

"Then Pilate took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." Empty, vain, ceremonial—from a soldier, from a Roman—yet fit emblem of the emptiness of principle which drove him to that cowardly refuge; fit emblem of the vanity of such a plea of innocence. A few drops of water to wipe out that "damned spot," when his agonized utterance should rather have been,

> "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No! this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green—one red."

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Well has an old English poet represented him as under the waves, and nothing visible but his hands eternally washing themselves.

"He lookt a little further, and espyde
Another wretch, whose carcas deepe was drent
Within the river, which the same did hyde;
But both his handes, most filthy feculent,
Above the water were on high extent,
And faynd to wash themselves incessantly,
Yet nothing cleaner were for such intent,
But rather fowler seemed to the eye;
So lost his labour vaine and ydle industry.

The knight him calling, asked who he was,
Who lifting up his head, him answered thus:
'I Pilate am, the falsest iudge, alas!
And most uniust, that by unrighteous
And wicked doome, to Jewes despiteous,
Delivered up the Lord of life to dye,
And did acquite a murdrer felonous,
The whyles my handes I washt in purity,
The whyles my soule was soyled with foul iniquity.'"

There are several important moral lessons, which the character and history of Pilate invite us to contemplate. To a few of these, I propose now to call your attention.

First, We see the influence of a previous bad character in leading a man into sin.

It is one of the most terrible retributions of a course of sin, that it so involves the criminal that he seems bound by a fatal attraction. "He is in so far in guilt that sin will pluck on sin." The act committed ages ago seems to stand by his side this very day, and though hated and shunned from his inmost soul, and though ten thousand vôices cry out against its repetition, there is a dreadful sympathy between the past and the present which shapes the destiny of the sin-

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ner for ruin. So was it with Pilate. If he had sustained the character of an equitable judge, the infuriated mob would never have dared to commit to him the fate of their victim. If his administration had not been previously corrupt, he would not have been appalled at the threats of the populace. Calm and unmoved he would have faced that opposition, fearlessly would he have stood forth in defence of right. But as it was, his reputation for past cruelty was the very circumstance which involved him in this forced and reluctant transgression. It was the very temptation which stood like a flaming sword at the threshold of reform, baffling every pure purpose, and barring his progress toward virtue. It was the very reminiscence which made the threats of the multitude so pungent, and their appeals so confident, as to a man who had become weak and cowardly under long indulgence. Alas! the governor has no weight of character, with which to withstand the solicitations and menaces which environ him. The conviction that Jesus is innocent, forces itself upon him at every corner to which he turns. Conscience utters its clear note of duty. And a threatening cloud hangs over the pathway into which his cowardice would drive him. But it is to decayed and decrepid and easily subdued sensibilities that the call is now uttered, and he has but a tottering form with which to buffet opposition. The moral nature of the man is broken down, and it seems as if he *must* go wrong. Oh! my friend, shun the sin of this day, if you would not have it come back upon you like a monster to whom you have sold yourself, and who will not fail to return, though it may be after long delay, to claim you as his rightful victim. At the very moment when you seem most near to heaven, at the very moment when all the principles of your better nature are rallying for your rescue, and the bars of your dungeon are almost broken, that old sin *may* come back, and smile coldly upon you through the iron grate, and mock your weak efforts to break from the imprisonment, and beckon you back to its

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old fellowship, and come in to lie down with you upon your bed of restlessness, as if determined to allow no peace to your sin-bartered soul.

Secondly, We may learn from the history of Pilate, the importance of firmness in support of truth and right.

When a man wavers from the first, or tries to compromise the matter with his conscience, or meet duty at half way, he is always sure to be driven back upon the very sin he is almost determined to avoid. There is no neutral ground which the moral nature can occupy with safety. There are unseen powers at work, watching its irregular action, looking upon its doubts, noting down its hesitancies, and taking fresh courage from every lapse to win it to their own snares. If the man move slowly in the pathway of duty, and ever and anon look wistfully back upon the sin he is leaving behind, and instead of settling the matter by one bold and decisive step, is veering off in this direction and that, and trying to shift the responsibility, and pausing and trembling and doing his little right with a pale face and a faltering gait, such a man must fall in the end. So have we seen one upon a rock, with the sea circling his tabernacle and crossing his pathway, and even calling to him as with a mother's voice; and the tide and the waves ever gain upon him, and already presume to touch with their damp breath the lower fringes of his garment, and it is only by one desperate exertion that he can clear the flood, and rest himself above and beyond its gaping mouth—but still he hesitates and calculates and edges along his little island, and looks over his shoulder at the advancing billows as if ashamed to turn his back on danger, and all the while the surges boil more furiously, and the ground grows slimy beneath his feet, and by and by the wet spray touches his forehead; but still he pauses and doubts and edges along, till the irritated sea pours over him, and he goes to be seen no more. How strikingly did this weakness and irresolution, this dallying with duty, this shuffling of responsibility, this

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edging along upon the rock instead of leaping to the shore, seal the ruin of the Roman governor. Oh! had he but boldly responded to that look which the Saviour gave him, had the majesty of the old Roman looked out at his eye as he proclaimed the innocence of the victim, had he that moment laid down unhesitatingly the parley with conscience, all would have been well. But no! afraid to act right, and more afraid to act wrong, he is tossed about between those two terrors till he hits upon the first expedient for relief, which is the first step in a downward series to crime. "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." Three more steps has he to take in this lingering process, each essential, each inevitable; for his moral nature will not allow him to break away at once from its dictates, while the mob as they read only of ultimate success in his already betrayed weakness, press on till they push him down. Conscience comes back to his rescue, after the questioning of the criminal, but he finds refuge from its clear glance in the court of Herod, and takes his next step downward. And now yet again must the governor pause, when even the ferocious Tetrarch sends back the prisoner uncondemned—and the safety of Herod's friendship would encourage, and the dream of his wife would warn, and the still unsubdued voice within would make one more appeal. But no! he has gone too far to recede. Barabbas comes to his rescue, and helps him down another step, and the shouts of the multitude proclaim that his descent is almost consummated. And at last well-nigh desperate from the long struggle, he takes the scourge, with a haste so ill-advised, that it does but arm him for the work of death he has not dared avoid, and as little dared perform. Alas! such efforts for Christ, prove but stopping places of crime, where he can pause and breathe, before collecting himself for the last great sacrifice. After all these struggles, he ends by condemning to death, the man whose character even malice cannot impeach, and whose innocence he proclaims with the

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very breath that utters the sentence. And this lingering, painful process does Pilate undergo, rather than boldly summon his moral energies for one simple act of right. Oh! my friends, when duty claims your action, look it steadily in the face, and turning neither to the right hand nor the left, march boldly forward. Conscience holds no fellowship with those who avail themselves of an effeminate and pusillanimous policy, for keeping friendship with both right and wrong. Duty lies in a straight line. It is the shortest possible distance between two points, your own soul and right. If you come at it by an angle, you come the roundabout, wrong way. You satisfy neither conscience nor the devil. You make a war within you, which will not terminate till you go back and stop at the wrong angle.

Thirdly, We may learn from the history of Pilate, that a regard for popular favor, when opposed to conscience and right, will often defeat its own ends.

The exclusive study of present, immediate effect is almost always at the expense of ultimate reputation. The very restlessness which prompts to a sacrifice of duty on the altar of human applause, betrays a want of self-respect and dignity of character which the multitude will in the end despise. That is the true basis of lasting popularity, which lifts itself firmly in defence of truth, which heeds not the paroxysms of rage, which displays such elements of character as the sober, matured thought of the people will be proud to claim in support of their rights. The traitor of his country or his party is almost always in the end despised by the enemy whom he has staked all to gratify, and the hosts of darkness will jeer at no victim with bitterer scorn, than him who sold the birthright of his moral nature, for the breathings of one day's applause.

So was it with Pilate. He might have known that he was giving himself up to the force of a temporary excitement. He might have known that the deep, settled hatred against Jesus, was confined to a limited cabal, while the phrenzy of the

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mob would soon subside. Had he stood out boldly against the torrent, the mass of the people in the reaction of their excitement, would have rallied around him as a favorite. But in the confusion of the moment he was as insane as he was wicked, and he did but pave the way for his own downfall.

There is another mode in which this motive in a bad man, will defeat its own end. It often places him in a position of fictitious popularity. The favor that surrounds him, is as phrenzied as that which hurried him to sin. He revels in the luxury of smiles, till it proves his ruin. His passions grow rampant in the short-lived sunshine, till they bring upon themselves swift retribution. So was it with Pilate. In reward for the indulgence he had granted the Jews, he seems to have assumed for himself an unbridled license of cruelty. A short time after, a real impostor appeared in Samaria, and in quelling this new excitement, the governor practised upon the principles he had learned at the trial of Jesus, and conducted himself with a brutal recklessness, which could be borne no longer. The very men who had urged him to crucify our Lord, and for whom he had violated the sacred rights of conscience, now rose in a body, and demanded his removal. Even the court of Rome shunned the society of the favor-seeking office-holder. He was at length driven to a place of exile, where like Judas "he went out and hanged himself." Fit end for the traitor and the cringing judge, and the applauses of the multitude proved as worthless to the one, as the thirty pieces of silver to the other; for they too did but purchase a burial-place for the bribed.

There is still another respect in which we may see how suicidal is a course like Pilate's. The very act for which he threw away his conscience, that he might please the Jews, and avoid the anger of Caesar, is the same that has given him an immortality of infamy. Throughout the world, wherever the name of Pontius Pilate is mentioned, it is to reproach his wanton injustice in delivering Jesus to be crucified. It

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is a stigma eternally attached to his character. He is known, he is remembered for nothing else. Yea, a direful retribution has burst upon him from the very source of which he was most in terror. Oh! my friends, there is a kind of ambition, which is noble and dignified, and worthy of moral beings—and it is so, because it arrays itself against that principle, which so often leads to mischief. When you find the fear of the world frightening you from duty, or the love of the world alluring you to sin, Oh! that you would pause a moment, and enlarge the sphere of your vision, before you act. Remember that the world is more than that gathering of friends whose praises you court, whose taunts you shun. It comprehends the infinity of duration, the universe of being. Act as if such a world were indeed watching you, as if all posterity were looking in at the door of your heart, as if eternity fixed its calm, clear gaze upon you; and "surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses," you dare not act wrong. Oh! how the plaudits of the present, will fade away before one glance from the keen-sighted, deep-voiced future. How mean will appear the ambition which is limited by life, compared with that which is eternal and all-pervading as conscience.

Fourthly, We may learn from this subject that a bad man may become God's agent in the accomplishment of good.

An old divine has remarked, that the dream of Pilate's wife may have been suggested by Satan, in order to prevent the crucifixion of an atoning Saviour. But no effort of the prince of darkness, any more than the strugglings of human depravity can frustrate the purposes of the Almighty. He fixes his calm eye on the operations of his universe, and the conflicts of nations and the strifes of men, are the parts of his counsel, and do but subserve his great designs. Whoever doubted the liberty of the Roman Governor? Who can have failed to notice in his sad history, the marks of an inward struggle where the laws of his own mind, and the dictates of

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his free, moral nature were at work. And yet how the sacred history reminds us that each event was foreshadowed by prophecy, and transpired in wonderful harmony with the purpose of God. As has been well observed, "It is Pilate's tongue that says, I find in him no fault at all. It is the Jews' tongue in Pilate's mouth that says, Let him be crucified. That cruel sentence cannot blot him whom this attestation cleareth," neither does that long struggle retard one moment the designs of Jehovah. How a divine hand seems to be upon the governor, determined to make each step of his erring nature speak forth of the innocence and divinity of his victim. How an Almighty Power is controlling and guiding every event in the direction of that greatest product of benevolence, the redemption of the world by the death of Jesus. And the act which is the last yielding of a tempted man, becomes "the wisdom and power of God unto salvation." Oh! man, whosoever, wheresoever thou art, that thinkest by thy weak resistance to frustrate the counsel of Jehovah, consider this; an eye discerns and superintends thy slightest motions, a power is working in thee and with thee, and bearing thee onward to consummate the purposes of thy being. Though it is thyself, the free, the manly, the godlike that acts, thou canst not hope by thy mad efforts to thwart one plan of thy Maker, or to derange that great wheel in which thou art revolving. And in anguish thou shalt one day behold, how all the strugglings of thy distempered nature, and the crafty plans of sin thou didst devise, did but work together for the glory of Him who created thee. Thou shalt suffer for that thou didst intend, rather than that thou didst accomplish. The evil is all thine own, the good is all thy God's. Yea, "the wrath of man shall praise Thee."

Finally, Let no one of us say, if I had been upon that judgment seat, Christ should not have been so condemned.

My friends, are we not conscious, some of us, of possessing similar elements in our own character. Is our past life so

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spotless, that we never find ourselves involved in new sin, by the fellowship of old transgression, or the power of long-cherished habit? Do we not hesitate and waver, and choose the rivers of Damascus rather than the waters of Israel, and try to make a truce with conscience, by doing half our duty? And at the very moment, when we are ready to yield, does not the fear of the world alarm, and do not its voices and its charms sometimes drag us back from virtue? Oh! my impenitent friend, I think I behold Jesus this day standing at the bar of your heart, and pleading for his long neglected rights. There are passions within, that gaze with fierce countenance upon the meek one, and goad you on, to consummate your sin by crucifying him afresh. But there are better affections which prompt you to look tenderly upon the self-arraigned, and conscience, like a fond queen that watches and weeps, sends in its notes of remonstrance, and calls up its visions of terror—"Many things have I suffered this day in a dream because of him." Fearful is the struggle of your moral nature. For a moment, you hope to conciliate the hostile parties, and your agitated mind betakes itself to Herod's bar, to an act of compromise, to the delay of a more convenient season. But again the conflict returns, and closer and hotter upon each other press the opposing ranks, and louder waxes the voice of duty and the call of crime. And then some darling sin comes forth for competition, and lays itself down on the altar of sacrifice, and mocks you with menaces of departure, and presses you this instant to choose between itself and Christ, while the alarmed passions raise the infuriated shout, "not this man, but Barabbas." Yet still you hesitate and waver—the scourge is in your hand, the cross is before you, but you know not whether to nail upon it your Saviour or your sin. And now fear raises her pallid form, and cries out as with ten thousand voices, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend." Oh! my brother, take heed how this trial terminate. Take heed in memory

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of that great assize, where Pilate and thou and I shall one day stand. Then shall the terms and the parties in controversy be changed. Then shall He sit upon the judgment seat of the world, who now stands imploringly before the judgment seat of our souls.

NOTE.

The preceding discourse was regarded by Mr. Homer as his most elaborate, and in some respects, his best. It cost him an extensive perusal of German commentaries, of Philo, Josephus, and other ancient authors. He never preached it to his own people; for his aim in the ministry was, not to advance his own reputation, but to consult the good of his hearers; and the state of his society required, during the brief period of his ministration a different style of address from that which he has here adopted. He preached the sermon first at Andover, Theological Chapel; afterwards at Danvers, Mass.; Salem, Crombie-street church; Boston, Park-street church; Buffalo, N. Y.; and Exeter, N. H. He was intending to preach it at South Berwick as soon as the wants of his people required.

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SERMON IX.

THE NEGLECT OF DUTY AN OCCASION OF POSITIVE SIN.

IF THOU DOEST NOT WELL, SIN LIETH AT THE DOOR.—Genesis 4: 7.

IT has been supposed by some critics, that the warning in the text is founded upon a mode of personifying sin peculiar to the Hebrew theology. These critics imagine that sin is here represented as a reptile crouching at the door of the human heart, watching its actions and emotions, and ready to burst in upon it in its moments of sluggishness or repose. Whether this interpretation be the right one, I care not now to decide. If it be correct, however, the image must not be carried beyond the general principle it is meant to shadow forth. It cannot be designed to intimate under this imagery that sin is actually something without the soul, independent of the will—a power tyrannizing over the man in his hours of spiritual exhaustion, and when he cannot escape or resist its wiles. Sin is the free act of a moral agent, and beyond the sphere of that free action, it has no existence but that which is fictitious or figurative. Neither can the text imply that the neglect to do well would be harmless, provided it were not followed by positive transgression. The sin of omission may be as aggravated as the sin of commission; and when the man has neglected known duty, there is no further

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step for him to take in order to be in a state of sin, for he is already there. The simple principle which the above named interpreters would educe from the text is, that the least cessation from activity in well-doing leaves the heart peculiarly exposed to the power of temptation, and will often result in outbreakings of depravity which were before unsuspected. "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," or, by that pregnant construction so frequent in the language of scripture, it lieth at the door, and will surely enter to claim possession of thy soul. If thou live in neglect of plain and admitted duty, besides the guilt of that negligence, thy moral nature is deprived of its great inward power of repelling sin, and by that first criminal omission thou dost start in a downward career which will not cease till thou retrace thy steps and satisfy the first demand of conscience for duty.

It will be my object not to defend the interpretation which has been given, but to assume it, as I may rightly do by way of accommodation, and to apply the words thus interpreted, to those who have already commenced the religious life, and I shall attempt to show, that the neglect of known duty will be likely to lead the Christian into positive sin.

I. One argument in support of this proposition is, that such a neglect will weaken the power of conscience to restrain him from sin.

Every Christian is sensible how much he is dependent upon the clear and regular action of this inward monitor. If it utter its notes of warning with distinct and manly tone, if it hold back the tempted soul with a giant's grasp, its right may be vindicated in the darkest and most trying hour. But if it speak with a hesitating utterance or touch with a timid hand, the slightest wave may sweep over its fortresses, the slightest volition may defeat its sway. Now for a healthful and active state of the moral faculty, there is nothing so essential as a complete and symmetrical development of the christian character; such a development as is secured only

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by the active exercise of all its powers, by the faithful discharge of all its duties. Conscience is a most sensitive agent—easily offended, easily diseased. If it be slighted or corrupted in one department of its agency, it will avenge the neglect or show the fruits of the corruption through the whole range of its administration. To-day, it comes to the Christian urging his performance of duty; to-morrow, it presses him to fly from sin. As is the obedience he renders now to its clear injunction, so will be the readiness with which it will afterwards return to avert his danger. This is the great law of reciprocity which pervades his moral constitution. If to-day he turn coldly from the beseeching voice, or defer the call to duty to a more convenient season, or deliberately choose a state of easy, quiet disobedience; to-morrow, when conscience finds him hard-pressed by the world, and just falling a prey to temptation, it comes to him as one who has broken his truce, who merits not and desires not its moral aid, who will listen but feebly though it speak in thunder-tones—and its diffident warning is scarcely heard amid the uproar of passion. Only the Christian who does his duty with fidelity and constancy, can maintain a peace with his great moral guide, and bear about within him, a protector which shall never fail him. But he who is negligent and careless of the work which God and his moral nature enjoin upon him, is ever removing farther and farther beyond the sphere of conscience, and as has been said, "to him its voice is low and weak, chastising the passions as old Eli did his lustful domineering sons. Not so, my sons, not so." It has lost the consciousness of its own power. Its original manhood is gone.

II. I proceed to notice as another circumstance which exposes the negligent Christian to sin, that his moral habits have become perverted.

We are, as has been often observed, creatures of habit; and it is a wise provision of our Creator, encouraging us in the path of duty, and warning us at the very threshold of a

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life of sin. He who is faithful to the demands of duty has a strong auxiliary against sin, in the rectitude and regularity of his habits. The course of virtue becomes for him the easiest course. The constant exercise of any part of the bodily system will invariably strengthen those faculties which are called into use, and render their action more easy and more efficient. And in the spiritual system the eye that has been ever occupied with moral beauty becomes quick to discern its graces or its blemishes, and the arm that has been exercised and strengthened in the line of christian activity, has acquired vigor to wrestle with temptation, and to batter down the arts of sin. The affections too have all been cultivated in the life of rectitude, the love of goodness has been constantly increasing with its exercise, and sin has become more odious as the soul has risen above its transitory joys. For the momentary raptures of sinful pleasure, such a well educated nature will never leave the steady and delightful sources of its elevated happiness. By constant exercise it has fortified itself against the inroads of moral decrepitude, and enclosed itself round about as with walls of adamant. But it is not so with the Christian who has broken in upon the harmony and evenness of his own spiritual constitution; who has suffered some links in the golden chain to be lost, some stones to be pushed out from the perfect structure; who has learned the first lessons of sin by forsaking the path which conscience pointed out to him; who has weakened his powers of spiritual action by suffering them to lie dormant; above all, who has lost the sweetness of a sense of inward purity which demands no higher love, no higher joy. When temptation comes to him, he cannot meet it with that love of holiness begotten only by the constant maintenance of an active, holy life. And the habit he has acquired of neglecting christian duty makes it now his most natural course to neglect the great duty of resisting sin.

III. The neglect of duty may deprive the Christian of that

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which is directly and purposely designed to restrain him from sin.

God has so ordered it that the spiritual nutriment of his children is obtained in the performance of christian duty. This is the economy of religion. The man who is faithful to the requirements of his God is furnished with so many barriers against temptation, while the negligent and sluggish disarm themselves of every weapon with which they could conquer the spiritual foe. The man who is faithful and diligent in the study of God's word cannot read those indignant reproofs of sin, and those exposures of its awful consequences, without having his hatred and his dread increased, and the lamp he lights at such an altar will not soon go out. The man who communes daily with God, who pours out to him his soul in secret penitence, who prays for spiritual strength, will secure the aid for which he asks, will avoid the sin for which he mourns, will be raised above the power of earth by assimilation with the Infinite and Holy. The man who frequents the communion of the saints, in whose soul is a warm tide of christian sympathy, who watches with fond jealousy for the good of his brethren, will find in turn his own errings kindly traced and reproved, his own feet recalled by tender and watchful affection, his own soul purified by intimacy with the friends of Jesus. The man who prays and labors for the conversion of sinners shall not only hide, but prevent a multitude of his own sins. He will be more careful for the consistency of his example, and at each temptation to stray, he will be frightened back by the prospect of injured and ruined souls. The man who devotes his property to the service of the church, is not tempted to revel in earthly vanities, or to cling to his treasures with a miser's grasp. And through the whole course of christian action, there is not a duty which does not receive its corresponding reward. But the man who looks coldly and infrequently upon his bible, who is a stranger in his closet, who shuns the company of

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Christ's flock, who has no love for souls, no devotion to the cause of charity,—such a one throws away his best armor. The contest that goes on within his soul is an unequal contest. On one side, is a depraved nature with propensities alert and active and craving for indulgence; on the other, is the principle of holy love famished for want of nutriment, unarmed with the panoply of duty, and unable to repress the onset. What wonder that the Christian falls into frequent sin if he neglect the only, the divinely appointed means for his own rescue.

IV. The neglect of duty will deprive the Christian of the influence of a good hope.

Hope is one great incentive to spiritual exertion; a most important aid to successful striving against sin. There are many portions of the church, where the worst thing that is said of a man is that he has lost his hope. In that brief expression are crowded all the elements of spiritual ruin. It is the epitaph of the buried soul. It tells of the wreck of christian principle, of the inner man where sin may stalk as in a wilderness, of the last hold on virtue gone. The old fable that let loose corruption and wo and sin upon the creatures of earth, did shrewdly confine hope within the casket, lest it should go forth to breathe its pure spirit over corruption, and turn the bad to good. In a firm, good christian hope, sin meets its strongest antagonist. The man who possesses it has a confidence and assurance which will nerve his arm and secure the victory. The breastplate of faith and love is not sufficient without the hope of salvation for a helmet. And sin will rage nowhere with more despotic sway than in that dark world, where hope never comes with its cheering, animating ray, with its pure and elevating impulses.

Now the Christian who neglects his duty must be constantly depriving himself of this great moral auxiliary. His energies will gradually sink down in discouragement. Sensible of his spiritual deficiencies, he is cheered by no such

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prospect of heaven as will make his soul independent of the pleasures of sin. Deprived of the sources of happiness in the christian life, he falls back upon the world for comfort and joy. He will not walk in the avenue of christian duty to the fountain of living water, and he must seek refreshment at broken cisterns. Moreover his faith becomes dim and weak. He only that doeth the will of Heaven "shall know of the doctrine." And the negligent, disobedient Christian is harassed by a thousand doubts and fears with regard to the character and government of God, and becomes confused as to the rules of moral action and the distinction between right and wrong, and these depressions and doubts will make him puerile and powerless in his efforts against sin. He has no delightful consciousness of the favor of God, no sense of union with Jesus, no dependence on the aid of the Holy Spirit. He is not restrained by that most charming yet powerful influence, the smile of a complacent Father. He has wandered from the sphere of those heavenly attractions, he has broken the bonds which bound him to God. His soul is dark and solitary. He looks to the church, but instead of being encouraged by its fraternal sympathies, it frowns on him as an unworthy, inefficient member. Under these combined influences he loses his self-respect, and when he has lost that priceless treasure, the last barrier is swept away, and he becomes the sport of every tempter. Oh! how forlorn, how shelterless is the condition of him who is not only shut out from the hope of heaven, from the light of faith, from the sense of God's favor, from the sympathies of the church; but who is deserted by himself, who becomes the object of his own despairing contempt. And how often that church-member who wakes up to the consciousness that he is faithless to God and to man, and disgracing his profession by a barren and fruitless life—how often does such a one become the victim of his desperate self-loathing; sometimes to sink down imbecile and decrepid, and suffer every passing wheel to

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crush him, sometimes to be urged on by hopeless forebodings to a course of sin. He has no consciousness of inward strength to sustain him in his trials. When temptation assails him, it is with a weak and trembling hand that he resists, and with a pale face which tells that he expects to be conquered, that he will be conquered. He finds an enemy within from whom he flees in terror; from whose dark, gloomy visions there is no refuge but that sin which drowns all other cares. Oh! brethren, shun this alarming state. Brace yourselves to the most self-denying activity in the service of your Redeemer. Bring your pleasures, your property, your talents, your all to the altar of sacrifice, rather than become liable to be haunted by such a sense of your own weakness and worthlessness as shall cramp every exertion, as shall chain you with worse than iron to your lusts, as shall ever prey upon your moral nature.

V. A condition of idleness will peculiarly expose religious men to the attacks of the adversary.

He comes to them, not only when they are depressed and discouraged, and too diffident of their own strength to resist with force, but he comes when the hands are unoccupied with spiritual and holy labors, when the moral system has sunk down into lassitude, and he there finds ample range for his arts. It is a principle applying to all departments of action that the want of employment will not only weaken the powers by depriving them of exercise, but will drive the soul for relief and excitement into some mischievous sphere of labor. The man that has no business to occupy his mind, and no cares to employ his time, you will find to be the man whose soul is invaded by impure imaginings—whose tongue is laden with slander against his neighbor. And it is pre-eminently true of our spiritual life. There is deep philosophy in the simple moral which we learned in childhood, that

> "Satan finds some mischief still
> For idle hands to do."

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Not that the Christian is never assailed by his great adversary, in the height of his spiritual activity; for in the most laborious services for God, there may be the suggestions of pride, and unholy motives to overpower him. But that is the devil's hardest work, to enter the sanctuary of an active soul, and corrupt its impulses and purposes, and make its sacrifices like the unbeaten oil or the strange fire of the sanctuary. Chiefly does he triumph, when he comes upon one who is asleep at his post, and into whose ear he may whisper his hellish suggestions, whose hands are engaged in no spiritual exercises, but are all ready for his service. Such is the empty and garnished house into which the unclean spirit enters, and finds an easy abode. Oh! brethren, avoid this spiritual idleness. Let not its dreamy lassitude steal away your energies. Slumber not in the lap of this wanton who can bind you with cords that you cannot break when the Philistines are upon you. Remember who lieth at the door, watching with eagle eye your moments of repose, and ready to spring upon you in your slumbers. Whatsoever your hands find to do, do it unto the Lord, for if you do it not unto the Lord, you must do it unto your great enemy. You are so constituted that you must act, that you must work. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

VI. The negligent and inactive Christian is in danger of being deserted by the Holy Spirit.

Those familiar exhortations not to grieve and not to quench the Spirit of God, although of late appropriated to another use, originally had reference to Christians. They teach that this divine influence does not forcibly retain possession of the human heart; but if it find there no fellowship of holy action it will leave it as an uncongenial sphere. The true disciple indeed is an object of Heaven's peculiar favor, and upon him is set the seal of that covenant which can never be broken. But he is sanctified and saved only in harmony with his own exertions. It is the Spirit which imparts efficiency to his

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strength, but if he do not exert that strength, the Spirit will withdraw his aid. "Work out your own salvation," said the apostle to one of the churches of his care, "*work* out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you." And he might have added, if you do not work yourselves, God will not be working in you. He disdains to abide in a stupid soul. He prefers rather to be the life of those that live. And if there be one condition of unwonted melancholy, it is that of the Christian, who by negligence has forfeited his title to this heavenly aid. Thus deserted and left alone, what can he do in the midst of worldly influences, with a sin-craving nature pressing him to the earth, and the adversary seeking for his overthrow. Whither shall he flee for a refuge from those sins, that cry out within his prayerless soul and demand their victim. And, my brethren, such may be your condition, if you live unconscious of your high calling, and neglectful of the claim of duty. If you will not use the means of grace, grace will not retain possession of your souls. The righteous retribution, the terrible chastisement of your sloth shall be, that you will be left to contend with your spiritual adversaries alone. And in that solitary, unaided conflict, while you wrestle with principalities and powers, and have no divine arm on which to lean, most forbidding shall be your overthrow. The church of God shall weep over the wound you inflict upon your Saviour, over the disgrace you bring upon his blessed cause, over the long dark sinful night in which you shall enshroud your own spirit.

There are two important inferences suggested by this subject, with which the discourse will be closed.

First, It is of great importance that Christians should carry their religion into all that they do.

There is a general impression among us, that religion has very little to do with the world. We have days of the week and hours of the day, appropriated to sacred duties, and then

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we go forth to our secular work as if God had no further claim upon us. Our religion is like a garment, which we leave behind us in the closet, when we go out to mingle in the busy walks of men. We forget that more than anywhere else, we need its chastening, sanctifying spirit amid the corruptions of active life. It is the expansive nature of our religion to demand and to receive the services of the shop and the study, as well as the closet and the church. There is no secular profession so high or so low, that it may not be comprehended within the sphere of christian duty; and that disciple who imbibes the spirit of Christ, will have a delightful consciousness that he is fulfilling his office by industrious and sedulous devotion to the business of his calling, by ever keeping in view his great taskmaster, by accounting his labors and his gains an offering to the Lord. With what significance is the warning of our text presented to us in all the work of our hands or our minds, in all our dealings with men, "if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." The moment we let down the standard of christian action, the moment we mingle with the world as those impelled by no higher and holier purposes, the moment we perform our duties with no thought of their relation to God, that moment we are exposed to fall. The love of gain, an unholy ambition, a malignant selfishness that tramples under foot the rights of our neighbor, or some other of the passions that lie in wait for the defenceless citadel may come in and usurp our best affections, and drive religion from its throne. And when we see a christian brother, faithful to the strictly religious duties of his profession, yet in his worldly life exposed to suspicion, and becoming a laughing-stock of the profane, we may learn whither to trace the difficulty. He has not suffered his whole life to be pervaded with the spirit of Jesus. He lays down his christian armor, at the very moment he needs it to repel the onset of worldliness. In the fellowship of the saints, at the altar of worship, in the service of the church, his offerings

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may be sincere and abundant, but in the great business of his life he is not acting for God. He is doing, but not doing well; and that is the door at which sin may enter, and corrupt the unconsecrated purposes, and inflame the unguarded passions, and press its way through the soul, till it has poisoned every pious pleasure, and turned the whole life into a career of wretchedness and guilt.

Finally, Our subject teaches us, that the true remedy for inconsistent, wandering Christians is an immediate and active engagedness in all the duties of religion. "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," and it is equally true, if the monster have possession of thy soul, the only way to drive him from thee is by engaging in those duties of which he shuns the sight. Abashed by the presence of what is holy, and feeling "how awful goodness is," he will shrink away and trouble thee no more.

Do I speak to any member of this church, whose soul is full of darkness and doubt, whose spiritual progress has been, of late, like a groping upon the mountains, whose feet often stumble as the enemy presses hard upon him, and all the arrows pierce his flesh—Oh! my brother, Christ sends to you a message of comfort and light, "Go work to-day in my vineyard." Christian, go forth to that work with a manly heart. Erect once more the long prostrate altar of devotion and sacrifice within you. Put your shoulder to the wheel of Christ's chariot. Give your energies to the church. Labor for souls as one that must give account. Make your whole existence a pathway of burning zeal. So shall you be strong. So shall sin cease to have dominion over you. So shall the Master come and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," Thou hast been faithful unto me, and now I will put beneath thy feet the powers with which thou didst wrestle so sorely. Yea, beloved, we are more than conquerors, when Jesus lives and acts within us, in the energy of a devoted christian life.

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SERMON X.

THE CULTIVATION OF THE SOCIAL VIRTUES NO PROOF OF HOLINESS.

AND ANOTHER OF HIS DISCIPLES SAID UNTO HIM, LORD, SUFFER ME FIRST TO GO AND BURY MY FATHER. BUT JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME; AND LET THE DEAD BURY THEIR DEAD.—Matt. 8: 21, 22.

THIS is one of the hard sayings of Jesus. An early and obscure tradition explains away its difficulties in a manner at once satisfactory and beautiful. The individual addressed in the text is supposed to be the amiable and affectionate John. He belonged to a family, you will remember, singularly fond in their attachment to each other. It was his mother who traveled a great distance, that she might tender to Jesus the request so replete with maternal ambition, "Let my two sons sit the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left in thy kingdom." The whole history of this disciple shows how great must have been the ardor of his social affections, and they no doubt at first constituted the chief obstacle in the way of his self-devotion to God. Now it was the custom of our Saviour to adapt his instructions to the besetting sins of those whom he addressed. To one who made wealth his idol, he would issue the mandate, Go and sell, and give to the poor; touching each man in the most sensitive part of his nature, that he might the more clearly disclose the true state of his heart. And so he comes to the disciple men-

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tioned in our text, as to one loving his earthly friends with an affection bordering on idolatry, and he determines to make manifest the defectiveness of his character. Not that he would have checked the flow of filial affection, not that he wished to prohibit or did prohibit the obsequies of a deceased parent; but he meant by the sharpness and severity of his rebuke to convey more clearly the great truth, that what was lovely and amiable and affectionate was not to be preferred to what was religious, neither could it be acceptable unless deeply imbued with a religious spirit.

The text naturally leads us to one of the hard points in our evangelical faith. It has been often said that the doctrine of our entire sinfulness does violence to our social sensibilities, that it fails to recognize those moral graces which give a charm and beauty to life, that it demands of the mother a judgment respecting a dutiful child against which all her better feelings revolt. It cannot be denied, that language unduly harsh and unauthorized by scripture has been sometimes employed upon this subject. The truth is, religion, while she assumes the posture of reproof, beholds in our prostrate, fallen nature, the ruins of much that is goodly, and she comes to many of our constitutional susceptibilities with a friendly mien, not indeed as themselves involving holiness, but as being the avenues through which holiness may enter and take possession of the soul. That is a cold and unfeeling theology which places the social virtues on a level in all respects with the instincts of brutes. That is a harsh and crabbed analysis which can coolly resolve the finer sentiments of our nature into mere selfishness. Such theories can breathe only where they are born, in the close air of the metaphysician's study; for under the clear sky, and amid the gladsome walks of life, they must seem more like caricatures than true portraits of humanity.

I intend in subsequent discourses,* to show the true con-

* These discourses the author did not live to finish. The thanks-

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nection subsisting between our religion and the social virtues. I shall endeavor to vindicate religion from the charge of having no fellowship with human nature, and at the same time to fix the reproofs of the gospel with increased severity upon the amiable sinner. This morning, I shall attempt to prove,

That the cultivation of the social virtues is no proof of a right state of heart.

I. It may be said in support of this proposition, that one who cultivates these social virtues may be neglecting the most important sympathies of his moral nature.

I think it will be readily admitted that a man cannot be called good, if he leaves an essential part of that moral nature which God has given him to run to waste. In a certain class of duties, he may be admirably correct and exemplary, but he is at best but half a man. Now the doctrine that asserts our depravity, as I understand it, simply asserts a fact, that men are destitute of a love for God as the ruling principle of life, and are governed by other principles which ought to be restrained. It does not assume its seat, as many have supposed, at a distance from human sympathies, frowning upon every exercise of the natural man as hideous and unclean. It recognizes a beauty in the social virtues, but in the very acknowledgement of that beauty, it is the more firmly fixed in its condemnation of human character, because it thus learns, that there are susceptibilities in the heart unexercised, depths of affection which have not been reached. It stands by the bedside where affection watches and weeps, and knows no fatigue; it goes to the hovel where charity is dispensing her bounties, and wiping the tears of the mourner; it witnesses the flushed cheek when deeds of noble, self-denying, disinterested virtue are recited; and it comes away from these scenes with the full assurance that man has an affectionate nature, that within his bosom there is a conscience which

giving sermon immediately following this forms a part of the contemplated course.—Ed.

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has survived the fall, disposing him to recognize and to love the right, and to hate and avoid the wrong. It is a gross misrepresentation of our belief when we are charged with looking upon men as blind and base, and with groveling tastes that cannot appreciate what is truly excellent. No, my friends, if such were the conviction of men, God would view them as objects of pity rather than of reproof. But he has created them with a more exalted nature, and the fault is, that they devote that nature to all pursuits and affections rather than the highest. And they who can love so well an earthly friend, and appreciate so readily an earthly obligation, and discharge so faithfully an earthly duty, have no thought or care for the higher, the holier, the heavenly. Let us see how religion appeals to the very susceptibilities which are exercised in the course of a virtuous life, that we may strip the moral sinner of every refuge, and expose the odiousness and the wilfulness of his depravity.

First, What could be more in accordance with our nature than love for God as our Father. Filial affection is one of the noblest elements of our being. There is no sight which awakens warmer pleasure than that of a child who cherishes in his heart the sense of obligation to his parent, who remembers the tenderness that watched over him in infancy, who forgets not the hand that has guided him through the changing scenes of life, softening the rough path for his footsteps, and affording shelter from the storm beneath the shadow of its own care. Beautiful indeed does filial love become, when it is summoned from that passive quietness into the path of laborious, self-denying, painful effort to repay the debt; when it devotes itself assiduously to the gratification of a parent's will, and needs but a glance of the father's eye ere it go forth submissively to the ends of the earth; when it shares its last farthing with aged poverty, or watches by the bedside of helpless decrepitude, and rejoicingly stretches out its arm for that second childhood to lean upon. But what shall be said of him

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who exhibits this untiring devotion to an earthly parent, while he bestows no thought upon a heavenly? Has not God a similar, and even a greater claim upon the affections? Is there not that in the thought of his creating and preserving goodness, above all of the spiritual tenderness which he manifests for the children of his care, which is fitted to speak to the deepest emotions of the filial heart, and send it forth in the pathway of childlike, and if need be, self-crucifying obedience? Should we not address one who could feel no such promptings, in the language of astonishment and reproof? Should we not say to him in the words of a foreign preacher, "Brother, a voice from God rings in thine ears, my child, why hast thou not sought *me?* Yea, from infancy up—first when thou wast sitting in thy mother's embrace, while she told thee the story of the dear Redeemer; and then in thy boyhood, when in starry nights thou gazedst on the grandeur of thy Heavenly Father's mansions, and thine eyes shed drops of thankfulness, that among all his millions of worlds, he forgot not thee, poor child; and then in thy youth, when sin conflicted sorely with thee, and thou learnedst the truth, 'He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool,' everywhere and all the way has thy Father's voice cried out to thee—wherefore seekest thou me not, my straying child, for I am still thy Father. Oh! ye who hang with all the fibres of your system upon a creature of God, and long after that creature, have you ever longed in the same way after your Creator? Why do you not learn what is the blessedness of the faithful one, when his inmost soul lies spread out in holy prayer before God; when the eye lingers upon the distant, deep, clear heaven, the fairest emblem of the boundlessness, the serenity and the magnificence of that love which first loved us—when his ear takes in no earthly sound, and only this solitary feeling lives in his soul, Oh! thou eternal one, Thou art."

I know that against this affectionate, all-absorbing communion with our Heavenly Parent, it may be urged, that it is

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unnatural for the creature to aspire to intimacy with the Creator, that it is hard for the visible to commune with and to love the invisible. But, my friends, how is it with you in your earthly affections? Do you feel no emotions of love awakened by the virtues of those you have never seen? Does not the soul fix fondly upon many an object that may be distant from its vision, do we not love and commune with the dead? Does the filial principle depend upon something palpable and material for its nutriment and exercise? How often does the orphan boy deprived in infancy of his parents, before he had learned to discern their visage, or to feel the warm breath of their love, still cherish them in his heart, bear about their image through life, behold their eyes ever gazing, and their hands ever pointing out the way in which he should walk. And similar to this is the communion demanded of the soul with God. Mysterious, yet not more mysterious than the dead, to each heart he speaks through the ten thousand voices of the outward world, and from within through the clear tones of conscience, and the soft music of the filial feeling; and his demand is for the memory and the love and the duty which the child owes to his parent. And when he finds that these varied appeals are all slighted, with what justice does he cry out against the vile ingratitude, "Hear oh heavens, and give ear, oh earth,—I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me."

Secondly, There is another and a beautiful class of emotions to which the character and person of Christ makes its appeal. He speaks to that fraternal love which we cherish towards those who were nurtured by the same hand, who look up into the face of the same parents, who share each other's joys and sorrows, and bear each other's burdens through life. There is a sense in which all mankind are our brethren, and it is possible for any one to become the object of this fraternal feeling. If a fellow man seems to fix on me his eye with

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a peculiarly fond expression, I am so constituted that I almost instinctively give back the affectionate glance. If he seems to love my society, it is my first dictate to reciprocate his friendship. If I find that he often sacrifices his own happiness for my good, a sense of obligation is joined to my reciprocated sympathy. If he daily comes to me with counsels of wisdom and comfort, and his words are like apples of gold in pictures of silver; he becomes to me as a brother. If I perceive that his moral graces grow lovelier as I become intimate with him, and his character daily assumes a dignity and grandeur surpassing all that I had seen before, he is to me more than a brother. I press him to my heart as meeting the highest demand of my moral nature, as him whom my soul loveth. Now Christ comes to us in just such a way. He appeals to our sympathy as he first loves us. He appeals to our gratitude, as for our sakes he descends from the peace of heaven, and struggles and dies amid the discord of earth. He is as a brother ever speaking to us by the pure, refreshing lessons of his instructions and his life. He stands out before us as the personation of that moral purity and loftiness for which we search elsewhere in vain. Oh! if there be a character that speaks to our condition, that has a right to demand the warm flow of a brother's love, it is the Redeemer of man. He lived and he died not merely to atone for our sins, but to afford us an object of fraternal affection which should harmonize with all the higher sympathies of our nature, and should satisfy every longing of the soul. How the heart clings to it as a refuge in affliction, and in the storm of sin and sorrow, listens to his cheering voice, and in the darkness of disease or old age can discern his image, when other objects of affection have faded from the view. So felt that aged servant of God with whom the sun and stars of memory had been darkened, and all the daughters of music had been brought low. When it was attempted to recall his consciousness by the sound of his own name, he replied, I know not the man.

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When mention was made of the idols of his early affections, they too had all been erased by the hand of age, and the old man strained the eyes of his memory in vain, for he could not recall its lost treasures. But some one spoke of the Redeemer of man, and his dimmed eye lighted up with new animation, and there was eloquence in his trembling voice as he said, "I remember that Saviour, yes I do remember the Lord Jesus Christ." But for you, my friend, in the vigor of all your powers, with affections that you prove your ability to cherish and exercise for others—this precious Redeemer, though he comes as a brother, though he plead long with you, though he offer you the choicest of his treasures, yet you will not give him back a brother's heart. Can you blame us that we call such singular and astonishing coldness, depravity.

Thirdly, There is yet another principle in man, to which religion makes its appeal. It is the philanthropic principle. It is founded on that natural sympathy which man feels for his fellow man, which prompts him to relieve his suffering, and often to endure great sacrifices to benefit his condition. We sometimes see in an unregenerate man this natural benevolence, displayed with wonderful beauty. The feelings which prompt it are not to be despised, and the results of its action are among the choicest treasures in this world of ours. But go to such a man, and appeal to his benevolent sympathies in a religious way. Talk to him of the interests of the immortal soul. Try to impress upon his mind the importance of laboring for the spiritual as well as temporal good of his fellow beings. Point out to him the great evil of his example as irreligious, and hold up before him the promise of enlarging his sphere of usefulness and making his labors work for eternity. Tell him all this, and how will he treat you? With coldness and stupidity. He is a kind neighbor, ready to pluck out his eye to save a fellow creature from suffering, but yet, when you bring to his heart this noblest object of philanthro-

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py, the relief of the soul from sin and wo, it awakens no cordial response. Oh! is there not something in the heart of man, kind and tender though it be,—is there not a perverse will which lifts itself up proudly and obstinately against the claims of religion; and though the appeal be to a susceptibility which is active in every other relation, it is in the highest of all relations dull and heedless and dead.

I think it will be obvious from these remarks, that the social virtues, instead of proving the absence of depravity in the natural man, only serve to fix the charge of guilt more deeply upon him. They show that he is capable of feeling and of doing all that religion requires, but yet he refuses to love and to obey. Though religion makes its appeal to him as a man, though it speaks to him as a son, as a brother, as a philanthropist, though its claim is simply for a new and loftier and more appropriate exercise of susceptibilities which he possesses and knows how to direct, yet he stands aloof from the winning voice, and will not yield himself to the delightful service. His virtues are amiable and lovely but they might all subsist in an atheist's bosom, they might flourish in an atheist's-world. There is no God in all his thoughts or affections or purposes. This is the depth of his depravity. This is the odiousness of his sin.

The proposition of this discourse may be established by another train of remark.

II. The exclusive cultivation of these social affections involves the sin of idolatry.

The gift is permitted to draw the affections from the giver. God's command is that we should love him with all the heart, and there is a response in our moral nature to the fitness of this demand. The character and law of God are suited to attract those very affections which we expend on the creature. Still more, they have a far higher claim upon our hearts than the objects which in reality engross them. Now, can there be idolatry more flagrant than this? God unveils

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his beauty and loveliness to the eye of the soul, but the soul replies, my affections are pre-occupied, I prefer, and I cling to the creature. These earthly treasures are my gods, and I will not have the Supreme to reign over me. Impenitent parent, are you not conscious of your criminality in this matter? In neglecting your Heavenly Father, do you not erect in your heart an altar for your child, and do you not offer there the sacrifices you owe to God? And when he summons you to your final account, how will you extenuate the guilt incurred, in defiling this sanctuary of your soul, by a homage and a worship so mis-directed?

There is another light in which this exclusive, idolatrous devotion to the creature may be viewed. It mars that moral symmetry which we love to see in human culture, and creates a monstrous disproportion in the character. Suppose a father were to concentrate his affections on a single child. On that one he should seem to dote with a fondness equalled only by the cold indifference with which he regarded all the others. On him he should lavish every kindness, and heap every luxury, while the rest of the famished flock should crave in vain for the crumbs from the favored one's table. By what name should we call that father? Amiable as might seem to be the origin of this *monomania*, delightful as might be the sight of a fond attachment between child and parent, we should call this exclusive and solitary appropriation of love, a monstrous anomaly. Make the case a still stronger one, and you have a faint image of the relation sustained by the amiable sinner to God. Suppose the object of this parent's idolatry to be the one least worthy, in all the family, of his confidence and affection, while they whom he passes by with neglect and indifference are the patterns of all that is dutiful and exemplary. Indulgent parent, affectionate son, kind hearted brother, this is the way in which you treat God. He has bound himself to you by ties closer and more enduring than the ties of earth. He is worthy of being loved with an

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affection that shall absorb your soul, and give direction to all subordinate loves. And yet you, infatuated in your idolatry, exhaust your nature in devotion to man, till there is left not one breathing of fondness for God. Is not this an odious, criminal partiality? Is it not a hideous disproportion? Is it not a depraved idolatry?

III. These social affections may be the means of inflaming the natural heart with hatred against God.

Every sinner has in his heart the elements of this hatred. Perhaps his circumstances have not been such as to call them forth into a violent outbreak, and he is not fully conscious of present ennity to his Maker. But God has so ordered it that few persons can go through life without meeting with something to draw out this latent principle, and lay bare to their own view the unreconciled state of their affections. Now there is no more sensitive spot, which God can touch than these very social feelings, and he wounds them most keenly when he comes suddenly and mysteriously, and tears from the very bosom of affection the object to which it has been clinging as its life and joy. The mother that goes nightly to the cradle, and watches the unconscious smile of her sleeping babe, and dreams that nothing can be so fair and so good and so secure from harm, is sometimes called to watch the gathering flush upon the cheek, to see those little hands clenched in spasmodic agony, to bend over the lingering sufferer in the tediousness of a long disease, till at length maternal care can be of no more avail, and her last duty is to wipe the cold sweat from the forehead that was so fair, and dispose the white garments for the burial. The father has a son, mature and manly, over whom he has watched from infancy with unwonted fondness, on whom he has lavished every expenditure, to whom he has looked forward as the representative of his own family and name, and the comfort of his old age. He finds his graces of mind and heart

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maturing with a beautiful harmony, and begins already to lean on him as his strong staff and his beautiful rod. But suddenly a deplorable disaster prostrates his hopes. The blow that strikes down the darling of his pride is worse than death; it dooms him to a perpetual sight of that most awful of spectacles, a diseased and shattered intellect. He beholds the glare of idiocy, where was once the sprightliness of youth, and the staff on which he leaned has become a broken reed. Now here are afflictions which may occur at any time to the most prosperous, and if the heart have not been educated to complacency in view of the hidden depths of God's character, what will it do in an hour of such deep desolation. Here are events of which there is no adequate explanation, except that God has caused them; and as religion is needed at such an hour, not to produce a stoical indifference, but a calm trust in the mysterious Providence, so such an hour tests the character of the soul and proves its wickedness if religion be not there. Oh! my friends we live in a fearful world. Many of us go through life with a small share of sorrow, but there is not one of us that may not be wounded in the very part of our nature, where all our energies and affections would combine in the agonizing prayer, "Good Lord spare thy people!" And how desolate is the heart that has no refuge to which to betake itself but its own bleeding sensibilities, which has no pious promptings which cause it to look up with a smile of faith to him who administers the chastening. My brethren, how much better is the love to which the gospel calls us than the love we find implanted in our social nature. This devoted to objects which must fade, that fixed on objects which are unfading and eternal. This sustained amid a thousand fears and doubts which increase with its fondness, that built on a faith in the promises of God which no storms and danger can shake. This often crushed and bleeding and desolate, with its idols all torn away, with its most fine gold become

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dim; that a perpetual fountain of delight, flowing more serenely and beautifully amid the sorrows of earth, like the river of God sending its streams through the valley of death.

And now, I appeal to you, man of the affectionate nature, whether you do not this day stand condemned before God. Do you not see the depravity of your heart more clearly in those very affections which you possess and exercise for the world, but do not, will not devote to higher objects. Can you give any reason for feeling no love to God, and to Christ, and to souls, except that you are a sinful being? Have you not cultivated your moral nature with a disproportionate, idolatrous devotion to the creature? Are you prepared to meet the divine administration with complacency and calmness, if it demands of your social nature its most costly sacrifice? Are you not an enemy of God, entirely destitute of that governing principle of piety, which is all that can give elevation and holiness to your soul? Yet to such as you, though she comes in the language of reproof—to such as you, religion appeals with sisterly tenderness. Unto men is her call. Unto the sons of men is her voice. And the demand is that you become subjects of an affection higher than earthly, and live and act and love like sons of God as well as sons of men.

NOTE.

This sermon was preached at Danvers, Mass.; never to his own people.

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SERMON XI.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL AFFECTIONS.—(A THANKSGIVING SERMON.)

WHEN JESUS THEREFORE SAW HIS MOTHER, AND THE DISCIPLE STANDING BY WHOM HE LOVED, HE SAITH UNTO HIS MOTHER, WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON! THEN SAITH HE TO THE DISCIPLE, BEHOLD THY MOTHER! AND FROM THAT HOUR THAT DISCIPLE TOOK HER INTO HIS OWN HOUSE.—John 19: 26, 27.

IT is said, that the celebrated Dr. Johnson once read a manuscript copy of the book of Ruth to a fashionable circle in London. The universal exclamation of the company was, "where did you get that exquisite pastoral," and the thoughtless were directed to the book, which to them had been associated only with gloom and dullness. It is in truth remarkable, that among a people whose domestic institutions and exclusive habits seemed so unfavorable to social refinement, the Old Testament history should abound in such delicate narratives of the affections. The ancient classics are notoriously deficient in the sentiments of the fireside, but the more ancient literature of the bible, even in the primitive traditions of patriarchal life, seems to have held the family relation among its choicest subjects. In the whole range of eastern story, I know of nothing more rich than the account of Isaac's courtship. The witching pages of fiction have never yet surpassed the true narrative of Joseph and his brethren. And the sweetest

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refinement which modern taste has thrown around the grave is unequal to the simple pathos of old Jacob, in his dying request: "Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite: There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah."

Yet it was left for the genius of Christianity to consummate the work of refinement. Indeed the whole career of Jesus seems to speak the language of a delightful harmony with the social feelings of our nature. In this respect as in all others, his life stands forth as a pattern for mankind to admire and imitate. His filial relation in the office of mediator, and that spirit of devout and affectionate submission with which he always addresses the Father, seem in this respect to have a peculiar significance. The fact that his miracles are almost all directed to the happiness of social life, gives the assurance that Christianity was designed to shed its light about the domestic fireside, and to be in turn refreshed by its gladdening glow. It was the sacred institution of marriage which Jesus honored by his first miracle. Throughout his whole career of benevolence, he seemed to take peculiar delight in healing the wounds of disappointed affection, meeting desolate widowhood as she was following out to his burial the last solace of her life, and giving back the young man to his mother; pressing his way through the mourning minstrels around the death bed, and waking the pale maiden from her sleep; healing the tortures that were worse than death, and restoring to health and reason and friendship those that had been a burden and a shame. Nor can we forget his attachment to the little circle at Bethany, where he used to take his sabbath evening meal, and whither he hurried with such fraternal sympathy to weep over the buried love of the sisters, and call back its object to life. The remarkable attachment of females to his person, seems to declare the same truth concerning his social character. When Chateaubriand was asked, why the women

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of the Jewish race were so much handsomer than the men, why with their thick eye-brows and long eye-lashes to distinguish them, they had escaped the expression of narrowness and malignity, which like the mark of Cain was fixed upon their husbands, what there was in the female, that popular literature should strive to adorn and beautify and exalt in proportion as it cast odium and contempt upon the male,—it was his pleasant but fanciful reply, that the reflection of some beautiful ray from Christianity had rested on the brow of the Jewesses, because they had not shared in the persecution of its great author. The remark was founded on truth, for the women of Judea were the firmest friends of Jesus. It was they who anointed him for his burial. Not a female voice mingled in the shouts which followed him to Calvary, not a woman joined in the fearful imprecation, which fixed his blood upon the race. They gathered with streaming eyes about his cross, when the ardent and bold and manly had forsaken him. They were earliest at his sepulchre, to engage in the last conflict with corruption. And now the incident of our text shines with conspicuous beauty in the same array of evidence. Hanging upon the cross—in the first freshness of his pain, his eye singles out one among the weeping group, the mother who bare him.

> "A son that never did amiss,
> That never shamed his mother's kiss,
> Nor crossed her fondest prayer;
> Even from the tree he deigned to bow
> For her his agonized brow,
> Her his sole earthly care."

To whom should he entrust her? Who would be most faithful in this tender connection? Who would best watch over her desolate old age, and stretch out his arm for her second childhood to lean upon? If Peter had been here, within sight of the sufferer, he would have spoken out in the

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forwardness of his generosity, and with indiscriminate readiness have invited her to share the pittance of his poverty. But Peter was characterized by boldness and zeal, rather than a calm, constant, fireside affection. Who but the "beloved disciple" himself was qualified to be the adopted son of such a mother? The most amiable, the most refined, the most competent of them all, and the only one that was constant in this hour of trial and suffering. "Son, look upon thy mother —and from that hour, that disciple took her unto his own house."

In pursuing the train of thought to which we are thus led, on the connection between Christianity and the social affections,

I. I remark that the social affections will almost invariably be found to exist in their most cultivated state, under the influence of Christianity.

This might be expected from that distinctive and fundamental principle of our religion first clearly taught by our Saviour, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Christianity teaches man to love his brother, to regard his interests, to seek his good, and it teaches this great lesson with a clearness and earnestness such as is found in no other moral system. Now there is no principle to which society in all its varied operations is more indebted than this. It is the grand stimulus of its progress. Wherever religion has had a fair trial, and has lived in its purity, it has indicated its own social character, not only strengthening and beautifying the ties of nature, and gathering kindred and friends under its grateful shade, but widening its arms to receive all men as brethren, and enrich all men from the same fountains of happiness, and gather all men in holy union around the same great altar of sacrifice.

An attentive survey of the history of the world, cannot fail to lead to the same result with regard to the social influence of Christianity. Go back to the remote ages of antiqui-

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ty, before the light of our religion had dawned upon the world. Many a bright spot shall you find in the moral waste. Many a city where art has lavished her most gorgeous treasures, and learning has reared her proudest seats. You shall find there the taste of the architect, in marble columns, gracefully carved cornices, and majestic temples that rear themselves towering and queenlike. You shall find there the skill of the sculptor, in the accurately chiseled proportions of that chief earthly beauty, the human form. You shall enter suburban groves, and listen to philosophy in her most inspired lessons, and poetry in her most winning strains. You shall be surrounded by everything outward that speaks of elevation and refinement. But when you penetrate the secrets of domestic life, when you look for the happiness of a pure and holy fireside, the light that is in them has become darkness—and "how great is that darkness! You recur to those whited sepulchres which are beautiful without, but within are full of loathsomeness and corruption. And while you glory in the achievements of human taste and genius, you weep that they can attain so little, when unaided by the gospel of Christ.

Follow the influence of Christianity during the ages since its origin, and you will find the nature of the case materially changed, yet leading to the same result. *Now* religion and refinement seem to go hand in hand. All that is splendid in art becomes consecrated to, or is consecrated by the spirit of the gospel. Painting and sculpture expend their choicest workmanship on the subjects of the bible, and the mosaic pavement, and the arched galleries, and the frescoed ceiling become vocal with the praises of God. And it seems as if the social refinement of Christianity attracted to its own service the genius and taste of man, as eminently harmonious with its spirit. Wherever it pressed its way, though among the hordes of barbarism, it invariably carried with it more or less of the blessings of cultivated life. And wherever tribes and nations that for a time have lived under its power, were

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left to relapse into their old heathenism, or gave way to the forced establishment of a hostile faith, it has been generally noticed, that barbarism and social debasement have come in, and stalked over the ruins of Christianity with the breath of a moral pestilence.

Perhaps the most obvious influence of Christianity, is seen in the elevation of the female sex. In the ordinary developments of heathenism, the condition of woman has been degraded, and even in the more refined and polished regions of antiquity, she occupied but a secondary, and that no honorable position in society. Christianity alone has adjusted with propriety the relative position of the sexes, and has first raised love from an instinct to a sentiment. It is the spirit of woman that gives now an unwonted charm to our popular literature, and while under a darker religious atmosphere the prevailing element may have been some vindictive passion, or the spell of dark and fiercely brooding destiny, the theme that now attracts all hearts is a refined sentiment of affection.

II. This leads me to remark, that religion acknowledges the auxiliary moral influence of the social affections.

It is a fact which you cannot have failed to notice, that Atheism levels its first blow at the family-relation. And it is a proof most striking and impressive, of the connection subsisting between the feelings cherished around the fireside of home, and those enjoined by our most holy faith. The ruthless hand that would blot out the thought of God, would turn society into a wilderness, so dark and damp that religious promptings cannot live in its unwholesome atmosphere. Its first step is to tear down the domestic altar, to erase the hallowed associations of childhood, to banish from the spirit the influence of its better affections, and to shut out every moral restraint that lifts a warning voice from the family circle. And when irreligion goes to assume its throne, it has to go over the ruins of all that is dear and lovely in the human bosom, amid the groans of forgotten mothers, and the tears of

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outcast children, and its throne is in a desert of human sympathies, and the subjects of its sway are no longer men but brutes.

I am aware that Christianity, from a perversion of its own principles, or from an undue heed to the suggestions of a heathenish expediency, has exposed itself to reproach in this matter. There was a time when religion seemed to turn its back upon the refined and delicate relations of social life, instead of addressing them with a voice of fellowship. What the church once fostered and encouraged and ever enjoined on the most devoted of her children, was a stern seclusion from what were deemed the intoxicating seductions of social life. But she found from bitter experience, not only what she had lost in refusing to take those refining influences by the hand, but what she had terribly gained, in the immorality and corruption and disproportion of a forced celibacy. Now a days, blessed be God, religion professes little fellowship with a cloistered monkery that retires from the cheering faces of men and women, and broods over its own gloomy pietism. The place where it loves to dwell is the fireside of home, and the sounds it loves to hear are the greeting of friendship and the gladsome voices of children, and the atmosphere in which it flourishes and rejoices, is that which has been purified and consecrated by the warm breathings of affection.

Religion may sometimes avail itself of this moral power of the domestic attachments, when no other influence can be of advantage. It may be, and has been found a most effectual means of grace. When the wanderer has strayed beyond the reach of every other influence, and the ordinary moral restraints have lost their power over him, there is a páthos with which those finer chords of feeling may sometimes be touched, when the sacred burial-places of his social memory are made to give up their dead. There rush back upon him all the scenes of his childhood, with its hallowed associations, and he

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traces with an appalling distinctness his progress from step to step towards ruin. A feeling of tenderness often steals over him almost unconsciously, as he thinks of the crushed hopes and broken heart of a father, or beholds the swimming eye of a mother, as it fixed on him its last earthly gaze of reproof, or now looks down from heaven. And there may be power in these reminiscences, fastening themselves upon his soul, following him to his haunts of sin, and giving him no peace, till in the brokenness of his spirit he exclaim, I will arise and go to my father. We instinctively acknowledge the same moral indebtedness, when we hear that a man of dissolute, hardened character has entered upon some new relation in social life, by invariably asking if the rough features of his nature are not softened, if he may not be redeemed by the sacred voice from ruin.

I know there is a common religious feeling which seems to imply that our affections are a hindrance to piety. There are some good Christians who in the hour of bereavement are fond of finding fault with themselves, and think they are deservedly punished for the excessive love they have lavished on a creature of God. But, my friends, we do wrong when we pretend to judge of the purposes and intention of our Maker; yet if our inquisitive minds will prompt us to conjecture of a hidden providence, let us beware how we represent it as frowning upon our earthly love. Let us remember that the demand of religion is, not that we should love our friends less, but our God more. Let us seek first of all, that high and holy devotion to our Maker, and instead of checking or subduing, it will give new strength and ardor to our social nature, and impart a loftiness and purity which it did not possess before.

III. This leads me to remark, that religion adds the spiritual to the natural affection.

It enjoins a love for the soul, a tender interest in the eternal welfare of the objects of our attachment. You cannot

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have failed to notice, what a sympathy almost always subsists between a fondly cherished attachment and the exercise of prayer. If the individual has been prayerless before, and possesses a heart as yet unfashioned by the power of holiness, there is yet something mysterious in those affections which draws him up to God, in ardent though unacceptable worship. He seeks some retired place where he may go and pour out his soul for the welfare of those who are dear to him. His desires rise above earthly protection, to the ministering of angels and the overshadowing of heavenly wings. In his separations his prayer is that of Mizpah, "The Lord watch between me and thee, while we are absent one from an other." Now this is only the uprising of natural religion in the heart; it is a higher development of those affectionate sympathies which in themselves have no holiness; but it shows what devotional elements there are in our being, of which the religious man may avail himself, and how naturally he who looks upon the friends of his heart as immortal beings, may be stimulated to labor and pray for their salvation. God has not left such a sphere of christian activity without the seal of his approval. The affection that fixes its eye upon some beloved wanderer, and watches over his erring footsteps, prays with a faith that cannot fail, and beckons and beseeches with a love that knows no end;—such an affection shall not lose its reward. It may go forth to its work with tears, but it shall return amid the shouting of summer fruits.

Every religious family is bound to its members by just such religious ties, and bears within itself the elements of this spiritual influence. Oh! if there be a spot on earth, on which God looks down with pleasure it is the altar of family prayer. Precious incense is that which goes up, each morning and each evening, from the sanctuary of affectionate hearts. Humble may be the scene of gathering, and lowly the voice of petition, but there is a sacred light encircling the group, and a solemn eloquence investing those words of common

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penitence and of common gratitude—the few kneeling together with hearts that throb with one affection for each other, and one desire towards God. Changes may come over that family-circle. They may be changes from joy to sorrow, or from sorrow to joy. Poverty may strip the old mansion of its costly adornments, or fortune may turn the cottage into a palace, and the smiling faces that once beamed among them may give place to the memory of the absent and dead; but that ancient bible, and those words of prayer, and the spot where old and young used to kneel together, shall all linger in the mind, gathering richness and beauty in the lapse of years, and giving to the eye of age a picture which shall never lose its greenness or its grace.

IV. I remark, that religion teaches us to cherish our earthly attachments in the hope that they will be perpetuated in heaven.

It is the chief glory of Christianity, that it brings to light life and immortality beyond the grave. It is the chief power of religion that it presses the soul onward and upward to feed upon this great hope.. It teaches how unsubstantial and transitory are earthly idols, and it fixes the eye on objects that are heavenly and enduring. When the fibres of the soul are woven around the beings who reciprocate its love, its prompting is that they be nurtured for a fairer soil beyond the tomb. Thither we may look amid the endearments of earth, and hope for a higher and more blissful consummation in heaven.

Here is the crowning beauty of religion, in the social character. The thought of eternity imparts a grandeur and a depth to the affections in their ordinary exercise. In the trials and anxieties of the domestic circle, the thought of heaven will communicate serenity and calmness, and drown each gloomy foreboding. And in those dark hours, when the hearth becomes desolate, and the mourners go about the streets, it is that blessed whisper of the gospel, "we shall go to them, but

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they shall not return to us," which assuages the bitterness of grief, and confirms the shattered faith, and inspires the heart with new and holy purposes.

It is in its connection with the influence and memory of the dead, that religion accomplishes what nothing else can achieve. I know there is a philosophy at such an hour which whispers its cold lessons to the bereaved, but they are truths which prop up, but cannot warm the sinking spirit. They have no power to draw life from the bitter herb. They do but strive to stay the first gush of agony, and when the wounds are healed up, they leave the spirit forgetful of the high moral lessons it has received, and with no purification from the fire through which it has been called to pass. The precept inculcated by this superficial sentimentalism is, "Look not mournfully on the past," rather than, "Look joyfully upon the future and be strong in hope of heaven." But not so is it with religion. It speaks to us from the vacant chair by the fireside, and the departed one seems again to occupy it, and we are all together once more around our old familiar hearth. It speaks to us in the well remembered scenes which we used to traverse not alone, and our old companions seem once more to be walking with us, and cheering us by their counsel. It speaks to us from their silent dwelling in the churchyard; and its voice proclaims that this is not the home of the dead, that they live—live in our hearts, live in our lives, live in heaven. Yea, my brethren, through life we may be conscious of the delightful communion. We know that they live and love. Ever they hover about our pathway. Ever they linger about the scenes of home, and touch as with angel-wing the altars at which they used to bow. And the language in which they ever address us, is that of solemn counsel to live above the world, to breathe on earth more of the atmosphere of heaven, consecrated as it is by the presence of God and the blessed ones who die in Him, that we may come home, there to live and to love also. And, my friends, is not

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that religion worthy of being adopted into our families, and enshrined in our hearts, and acknowledged in each scene of joyous festivity, which borrows such a lustre from the fireside, and gives back in return its own most blessed sunshine; —a religion which can draw such happiness and instruction from the very sorrows of earth, which can make the dead still live in our circles with the blessedness of a new life, which can call us all together at last among the families of the blessed, to an eternal thanksgiving in the heavens.

I have thought, my friends, that no sentiments could be more appropriate than these upon this return of our annual festival. Our fathers were men who looked to the good of posterity in the institutions they established. They had secluded themselves from the blessings of their native fireside, not that they loved home less, but that they loved liberty more. They brought their household gods with them across the ocean, though they left the old altars behind. They wished to render attractive this new home in the wilderness, and they gathered about it the lights of christian influence. A day set apart for gratitude to God could not fail to bring the happy family together, to renew their vows to one another while they paid united tribute to their common Father. It is fit that the day should be still hallowed as it is by all the precious associations of home, that it should bring back the son to his mother, the daughter-in-law to her mother-in-law; that it should gather old and young around the table of plenty and the altar of thanksgiving. Let us come, my friends, thanking God that we are Christians by birth, and deriving an impulse from these scenes, that we may become Christians in heart. Let us consecrate these hours to remembrances of the absent, and set up the vacant chair to the table for the distant ones who remember us this day in their prayers. If to some of us these associations are crowded with sorrow, and we cast back our thoughts to the light-hearted and joyous who were the life and sunshine of the day, but whose

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light has been put out forever; let us mingle these sacred memories with our joys. Let the forms of the past come in to cast their chastening shadow over our present pleasures. Let us look away to the "fair flowers of our garland as they bloom yonder lovelier and forever."

"He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know,
At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair field or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

Dear beauteous death! the jewel of the just!
Shining nowhere but in the dark,
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!"

NOTE.

The preceding discourse furnishes as good an illustration as can be given of Mr. Homer's social and domestic character. A clergyman who heard the sermon preached, and who associated its breathing words with what he well knew to be the spirit of its author, wrote the following account of the first and the only Thanksgiving service which Mr. Homer performed. "The sermon and indeed the entire service was peculiar and very impressive. His hymns were well selected. His prayer contained a recognition of the hand of God in planting the American colonies, in guarding and in guiding them amid difficulties and dangers; also a full expression of thanks for present blessings. Several passages from the eightieth Psalm were introduced into the prayer with singular appropriateness. For his scripture, he read the entire book of Ruth, and with such spirit as to render it altogether new and charming. His sermon, though long, was delivered

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in his happiest style, and held the attention of the congregation to the last word. The whole effect was most delightful. Strangers present pronounced it an exquisite specimen of sermonizing. I think that the service, taken as a whole, was one of the most beautifully impressive which I ever attended. In contrasting it with my own performances, I felt strongly inclined to give up the clerical profession."—One of Mr. Homer's most intelligent parishioners was asked whether the reading of the whole book of Ruth, before the Thanksgiving sermon, did not prove wearisome to the audience. "It was the most interesting part of the service," was the reply. "Mr. Homer looked as if he could not help reading the whole, and the four chapters seemed only too short." The sermon was concluded with the two final stanzas of Henry Vaughan's 'Psalm of Death.' The Editor has taken the liberty to add a third stanza from the same exquisite poem. The reasons for the addition will be obvious to the critical reader. The sermon was never preached except at South Berwick, Nov. 26, 1840.

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SERMON XII.

THE EXTENT AND BROADNESS OF THE DIVINE LAW.

I HAVE SEEN AN END OF ALL PERFECTION: BUT THY COMMANDMENT IS EXCEEDING BROAD.—Psalm 119: 96.

THE Psalmist employs the word law and its synonymes in a most extended sense. In the text he designs to contrast the whole religious system with the vanities of life. He had seen an end to all earthly perfection; as a quaint divine expresses it—"Goliath the strongest overcome, Asahel the swiftest overtaken, Ahithopel the wisest befooled, Absalom the fairest deformed;" and now with delight he turns to the fulness of religion,—its doctrines so complete, its requirements so ample, its promises so sure, its rewards so glorious. Thy commandment, he exclaims with his admiring eye on the vast and multiplied blessings of God's word, thy commandment is exceeding broad.

Included, and perhaps prominent in the mind of the writer, was the idea which lies upon the face of the text, the superiority of divine to human law. In his official career as a statesman and a monarch, he had seen an end to all perfection here. The code of Moses divinely inspired as it was, and in its ampleness and wisdom calling for the admiration of every child of Israel, was yet subjected to all the limits and deficiencies of what was human and earthly. In what strik-

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ing contrast to the tables of stone with all their accurate, minute and magnificent detail, did the law of God stand forth in its simple majesty, and its comprehensiveness. Let us draw out this contrast in the present discourse, and consider the superior extent of the divine law, and its freedom from those limits which check the operation of human ordinances.

It is not my design in the present discourse to detract from the honor and respect we all owe to those outward forms of law under which we live. They secure our peace and happiness, and they merit our gratitude. They are an echo of the divine law, a shadowing forth through earthly symbols of principles which are eternal, and they deserve our homage and veneration. But exposed as they are to the limits and imperfections of everything earthly and human, though as perfect as they could be, we should bear in mind that they are but an echo and a shadow. We should look away often, to the great archetype in that divine and eternal law, of which it has been so beautifully said, that "her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempt from her power, though each in different form and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy." To exalt this great original, rather than to depreciate the imperfect copy, is my present design.

I. I remark that the superior broadness of the divine law is manifest, from the fact that it is designed and fitted for the whole universe of moral beings. "The commandment is exceeding broad;" because it stretches out its arms to gather the moral universe under its sway. Its voice reaches every remote corner of space where spirit dwells, and its power is felt and acknowledged as far as its voice is heard.

First, It can reach all moral beings.

Human law of course issues its mandates for the earth alone, and on men alone can it execute its penalties. It can-

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not ascend into heaven and bid the angels obey. It cannot go down into hell, and command allegiance from the rebel host. It cannot travel through space, and hold up its glittering sceptre over the myriads of intelligences that people the illimitable domain. A proud monarch once took his seat upon the ocean shore, and bade the advancing tide go back, but the billows heeded not; they only rolled on wave after wave, till in mockery they kissed the monarch's feet. And if the dumb elements of nature refuse obedience to an earthly mandate, how much more shall the spirits of another sphere assert their independence of such a sway. To one accustomed to contemplate himself and the earth where he dwells, as but a speck in God's moral creation, how inferior appears the jurisdiction of the mightiest empire which terminates with men and with earth, to the extended sway of that government which rules over all. It is acknowledged above and below. It is the law of heaven and of hell. It pervades all existence. Jehovah himself, I say it with reverence, is subject to its standard and its dictates. And wherever in the wide universe of God conscience sits, the law is with her, inseparable from her very being, speaking in her voice, beaming in her smile, smiting with her scorpion sting.

But it is not my purpose in this part of the discourse, to push the contrast into such remote extremes, or to insist upon the obvious and admitted extension of the divine law into other spheres than our own. I wish to bring the subject to a more immediate and practical bearing upon ourselves, and to confine the comparison to the operation of law among human beings. The contrast will be yet more striking, if we consider how much wider is the divine law in its influence over men. It is designed for all men. It can reach all men. It not only claims to be superior in the universality of its jurisdiction, but it meets human law in its own narrow sphere, the sphere for which it has been adjusted and modeled, and it claims the victory there.

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I ask, where is there a human statute which extends over all the earth, which reaches with its command and its penalty the subjects of all dynasties, which protects and punishes the savage in the wilderness, while it exerts its power over you and me? The constitution of things forbids the possibility of such a wide reaching law. I am not finding fault with the arrangements of government, or the divisions of society. I do not say that it would be better on the whole, if all mankind could be gathered into one family, or that justice would be as well administered if there was but one legal code; I only wish to call your attention to the extreme narrowness of the sphere in which any law can operate. The natural boundaries which separate states, the diversities in opinion and language, the distances which human speed and sagacity cannot easily overcome, all put a limit to the extent of government, and require that human law, however uniform its principles, be restricted in its influence. The man who steps across the little stream that skirts our own village, is beyond the eye of the executive under whose peculiar and immediate authority we live, and the man who goes a little farther, and crosses another boundary almost as narrow, removes himself from the power and the protection of that great national constitution which is our boast and glory. Let the relations between the separate governments be as intimate and as friendly as they may, and let law protect herself as she does among us, by the officer of public justice standing across the boundary with the seals of both states in his right hand, there always have been, and there always must be incident to these limits of dominion, evasions of rectitude, and escapes from penalty. Compare with this the wide extent of the divine law, obligatory as it is upon men of every clime and tongue, covering the remotest dwellers on the face of the earth under the same broad shield of protection, issuing its mandates alike to the civilized and the barbarous, to the proud citizen of a free government, and the cringing slave under a despot's

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chain—the same everywhere and to all in its present influence, and able to gather all in the day of reckoning, from every kindred and tribe and people under heaven, around the same tribunal of judgment.

But let us bring the question to a still closer issue. We have tested the extent of human law in its reference to mankind at large, let us now examine it in its power over the few who are included within its admitted and narrow jurisdiction. We shall find even here, that the divine law reaches farther than the ordinance of man; for who can pretend that every criminal receives at the hand of the law under whose authority he lives, the deserts of justice? How many a shrewd transgressor can sin under the very eye of the government, without detection. How many a detected criminal can take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, where the eagle-eye of the police, and the sentence of the court cannot follow him. If in the providence of God it almost always happens, that crime meets with its reward even in this life, it is not so much from the vigilance of man, as from that sense of divine law which agitates the guilty, which rouses conscience from its long slumber, which makes the criminal become his own betrayer. Under the eye of God, there can be no trickery to deceive, no mist to blind, no speed to run away from its searching gaze. For that law we bear about within us. It is inseparable from our being. It follows us wherever we go. The more we try to look away from that living tablet of the heart, the more its characters blaze out with flames of indignation, and while we run away from its drawn sword, it smites us to the earth.

Whether we look then at the universe of being, at the world of mankind, or at the jurisdiction of an earthly court, we find that the divine law is superior, because it reaches so far that not a solitary being eludes its sway.

Secondly, I notice as an indication of the fitness of the divine for a universal law—to comprehend all beings, especially

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all men under its sway—the circumstance that it is intelligible to all.

The mysteries of human law are in the hands of a favored few. It requires years of patient study to become familiar with them, and the best labors of a long life to master them thoroughly. Even then, there is scarcely a nice question that shall be started which will not send the jurist to his library, to consult his standard authorities, or look over his file of precedents. The court are often disagreed as to the precise force and tenor of the books, and the language of the statutes is often so involved in technical intricacies and circumlocutions, that the mass of the people can be acquainted with them only through their learned interpreters. Every attempt to correct these deficiencies is deserving of praise, and will not be without great benefit to the state; but let the digest be as lucid and accessible as it may, how large a proportion of those who see it and read it, are ignorant of the principles on which it is founded, how many individuals never see it at all. The changes too, to which the wisdom of our legislators is constantly exposing the statute book, cannot but introduce confusion and embarrassment into the popular study of the law, so that legal science exalted as may be its origin, and ennobling as may be its principles, must be considered too deep and obscure and variable to be intelligible to the mass of our citizens.

But how different the law of God! So simple—comprehended as it is in those few short words, Love to God and love to man. So clear—clothed as it is in no misty and redundant verbiage, but in the forcible characters of conscience. So unchangeable in form and spirit—that heaven and earth may pass away before one jot or tittle of that law shall vary. Throughout the universe of God there is not a solitary individual, however low his condition, however impoverished his attainments, that can say with truth, this great law of eternal rectitude I have never known; for every human being bears

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within his own soul a record plain and legible of the heavenly mandate, and if he pervert its meaning or disregard its injunction, it is his own fault.

It is a familiar principle of human jurisprudence, that ignorance of the law can excuse no one. And although there may be solitary cases where the operation of this rule may not be strictly equitable, its uniformity no doubt fortifies the state against much falsehood and evasion. But the divine law goes further. It holds not only that ignorance is no excuse for the criminal, but that it rather aggravates his guilt. When he dares to plead ignorance of what might have been so intelligible, he accuses himself of having blotted out the handwriting of conscience, of having shut his eyes to the light, of having voluntarily chosen darkness and blindness—and his doom must be that of one who has committed suicide upon his moral nature, and trampled under foot the precious record which the Creator had inscribed upon his heart.

Thirdly, I remark in proof of the universality of the divine law, in its application to individuals, that it commends itself to all.

There are many human laws which we are forced to obey, against which we are prone to murmur. Our own country has been recently the scene of an almost unprecedented excitement, in consequence of the hostility of a part of the community to certain acts of the government, which were becoming the supreme law of the land. The most fearful revolutions which the world has ever witnessed, have been the result of differences of opinion with regard to law. The views of men vary with their circumstances. And as "to err is human," it would not be strange if many a code imposed upon its subjects burdens greater than they could bear.

But of the divine law we must acknowledge that it is always right. In every man's bosom it recognizes a friend who will plead long and faithfully for its vindication; and he who rises up against it in rebellion, rises up against his own

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soul. It never utters its voice of command, where there is not a consciousness of ability to obey. It is never slighted, without a pang of remorse to prove that its requirements were due. Even its terrors, however much we deceive ourselves for a time, its terrors, I say, are in harmony with the very elements of our being; and those who suffer under its eternal frown feel constrained to go down to perdition without a murmur at their doom, and to admire forever the justice and awful goodness that condemn them.

We see then that the divine law in its application to individuals, has a wider and broader field than laws of men. It comprehends the whole human race beneath its sway. There is not one who fails to acknowledge its rectitude. There is not one who can mistake its clear directions. There is not one who can withdraw from its gaze or its power. My hearer, thou art a subject of that law. Amid the millions throughout the universe for whom it is administered, it singles out thee from the mass; and for thee its vigilance is as searching and its penalty as sure, as if thou wert the only being in all God's creation, as if for thee alone the moral code was devised, and for thee alone the blazing summit gave forth its voice of terror, and for thee alone the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever.

II. I proceed to notice as another proof of the superior broadness of the divine law, that it extends to all moral actions.

It not only includes all moral beings under its sway, but it takes cognizance of every act however trivial and minute. Not the most secret conduct of the most secluded individual escapes its gaze or its award.

Let us notice the different classes of actions which elude the vigilance of human law, that we may see the superiority of the divine government in ferreting out every species of transgression.

There is a large class of delinquencies within its ad-

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mitted cognizance, which, as we have already observed, the law of man can never reach. It cannot punish crime unless its commission be supported by ample testimony—and how many an action has it summoned to the bar of justice, where an ingenious defence has confused the evidences of guilt, or contrived a thousand subterfuges from the strict enforcement of the penalty. It is wise in our judicatures, that they lean on the side of mercy; but no doubt in so doing they leave the wrong unpunished, as often as they extricate the unfortunate from embarrassment. How much superior is the execution of that divine law, which needs no testimony to aid its supervision of human conduct, but can discern everything by the infallible insight of the great lawgiver himself. And let the man perform his deed in the darkness of night, with no witnesses, not even the birds of the air, to the foul transaction; let him bury every trace of his crime so deep in the earth that a human eye cannot penetrate to it; let him put a seal upon his lips, or retire alone to the wilderness, lest his conscious guilt speak out the story of his shame—the eye of the divine law has seen that crime, and the book of remembrance has recorded it, and the day of judgment shall reveal it upon the housetop, with a distinctness equalled only by the vivid consciousness of the criminal.

It is another peculiarity of human law, with regard to the actions within its cognizance, that it must stop with the outward development. It can discern only the external act, without judging of the intents and purposes of the heart. I know there are many cases where a malicious purpose is included in the indictment, and must be shown to exist before the accused person can be found guilty. But I suppose that in reality this is only a legal fiction, in faint and distant imitation of the divine law, which makes the bad motive the whole crime. Strictly speaking, our courts never judge or condemn anything but the outward act. This is evident, because the secretly cherished purpose is never noticed, until

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something is said or done or attempted to be done; and whenever the malicious purpose is included in the indictment, the crime is not so much inferred from the malice, as the malice from the nature and circumstances of the crime. The law, if it ever notices the intention or motive, goes from without inward, and from something the man has done, judges what must have been his motive. Now in the divine law the process is just the reverse, from within outward. It notices the man's motive first of all; and from the character of the motive, it determines the character of what he has done. And how much more accurate must be the decisions, and how much more complete the judgments of that law, which is not forced by the limits of its knowledge to reason perpetually in a circle—inferring the malice from the crime and the crime back again from the malice—but which takes the natural course, goes up at once to the fountain-head, the thoughts and purposes of the heart, and knows from them what must be the issues in life and conduct.

But there are many external acts which human law cannot reach with propriety, as it does not pretend to do. It cannot enter the domestic circle, and correct the private ills of the family group. It cannot check or soften the acerbities of temper. It cannot push down the ebullitions of envy or hatred or jealousy. It cannot discern the petty tricks of trade. It cannot hale a man to justice because he is pursuing the ends of a grasping ambition, or hoarding the treasures of a selfish avarice, or making profit on the ruin of his neighbor's soul. It cannot punish the thousand omissions of duty, the neglect of the sanctuary and the bible, and the steeled heart against the cry of the poor. These and similar things are wisely and justly beyond the province of human law; and it ought not to intrude its visage too far into the chambers of conscience where God sits on the judgment seat. But oh! thou correct and exemplary citizen, thou who hast kept every law in the statute-book from thy youth up, thou

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who boastest thyself that thou hast never stood at the criminal's bar, or turned pale at the sheriff's mittimus, or shivered in the damp walls of a jail, think not, most perfect man, think not that it shall be so with thee at the divine assize. Terrible must be the reckoning, when the weak, whom thy slanderous or angry tongue has wounded, when the ruined whom thy secret dishonesty has wronged, when the destitute, whose wants thou hast slighted, all rise up as witnesses that thou hast violated the great law of love, that thou hast wronged thy neighbor, that thou hast hated thine own mother's son.

But it is the grand superiority of the divine law in this respect, that its chief cognizance is of the spiritual man, of the affections of the heart, with which human ordinances from their very nature can have nothing to do. Where the law of man lifts its salutary warning, and proclaims thou shalt not do the hurtful or the impure or the mean thing, the law of God goes further and says, thou shalt not cherish the incipient feeling which prompts to the act, thou shalt not gaze with the eye of longing on the polluted object. The law of God goes further still, and where it would be profane and blasphemous for the edict of man to enter, into the inner sanctuary, the very holy of holies of the human bosom, it discerns the state of the religious affections, the relation of the heart towards God. If it finds rebellion there, if it finds positive hatred, or if it finds only a passive disobedience to the great command, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, it will not deign to look further—let the man be as good as he may be in his own and in other's esteem; let him be unfaltering in his loyalty to government and to law, and even perfect in his citizenship; let him be amiable in the private and benevolent in the public walks of life—if the love of God be absent from the soul, it esteems all these virtues, not as worthless, but, so far as religion is concerned, as nothing better than the poisoned streams from a poisoned fountain. As it summons the spiritual criminal to the bar, it proclaims as

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the great and fearful principle on which the trial must proceed—Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point is guilty of all.

III. I notice as the last evidence of the superior broadness of the divine law, that it extends through all duration.

Time is one of the chief limits to the operation of a human code. The reaper in his flight cuts down the tares as well as the wheat, and the vices of men with their virtues are lost in the lapse of years. The memory of a crime long ago committed is faded and indistinct, and the evidences may be so confused in the distance, that the guilty will escape his doom. Human law too cannot reach beyond the present life. The capital offender may anticipate the sword of justice, by laying violent hands upon himself, and his lifeless frame hanging suspended from the grate of his cell, or dashed against its granite walls, becomes a ghastly mockery of the court, and seems to proclaim in sepulchral tones, I am beyond your power now. The waiting executioner cannot call back the suspended animation, and the sheriff must knock in vain at the door of the dead.

But not so the divine law. It is not subject to the mutations of time. Co-existent with the Deity who is its great administrator, its broad sweep is from eternity, into eternity, through eternity. The same yesterday, to-day, and forever, it brings up the crime of a century's growth, as if it were but a moment old. Its action like the being of God is an eternal now; and upon the guilty it has its eye, ever with the same fixed gaze. He may hurry away into forgetfulness of himself and all around him, but the eye is there still. He may rush heedless into eternity, but the same eye meets him in the world of spirits, lighted up with new fires, which wake the memories of his old guilt from their long oblivion, and stir up the remorseful consciousness of present alienation from good. Here is the chief extent of the divine law, that its obligations and its penalties are both eternal. Sometimes

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in this life it will begin the work of retribution, and kindle the flames of conscience with all the terrors of a present and living hell; but its grand sphere is in eternity, where the spirit is left bare to its searching gaze, to the recollection of past and the consciousness of present guilt, compelled to hear the constant mandate to do right, yet as often of its own free, evil nature drawing back to do wrong, and withering under that same eye which blazes on forever, and ever, and ever. This is the awful power of law when for the last time it seals up the book of account, and all its kind efforts to retrieve the criminal have proved unavailing, and obstinately and wilfully he enters the prison door, and invites the avenging stroke. Oh! Lord how long? may be his distressing interrogatory when ages on ages have rolled over his imprisoned spirit, till his own history looks like an eternal past. Oh! Lord, how long? but the answer that comes from the judgment-seat, proclaims that the arm of the law is as broad as infinite duration, and its punishment must be as deathless as conscience and the soul.

My friends, it becomes us to tremble at such a law as this. Our own consciences and the word of God proclaim that the divine law is such, and that we are the subjects of it. It is a law that pervades the universe, and it fixes its eye and stretches out its arm over you and over me. It is a law that is all-penetrating, and it treasures up our secret as well as our outbreaking sins; it sits by our side in the sanctuary, and it follows us home to the fireside and the closet, and whether we sin with the hand or the tongue, or the mind, it notes all down alike. It is a law that is eternal—in old age, it binds us as it did in youth—in the grave corruption cannot stay its power—never, never, never, shall we cease to hear its thrilling tones. It is a law, whose worm, I speak the language of inspiration, whose worm if it be once let in upon the soul can never die, whose flame if it be once kindled, burns on and on, forever. Oh! my friends, from a law like this, so

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personal, so searching, so lasting, so terrible, which way shall we flee? Within is the despair of conscious guilt. Around, which way soever we turn, is that keen eye and that iron sceptre and that blazing scroll. But above them all, blessed be God for that sight, above them all is the cross of Christ, and on its front, we trace in living characters—"not to destroy but to fulfil"—"Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth."

NOTE.

A member of the Piscataqua Association has given the subjoined account of the preceding discourse.—"It was my lot to hear but one of Mr. Homer's sermons. The text was, Thy commandment is exceeding broad. It was preached at Kingston, at a meeting of our association of ministers. The effect on a plain and rather small audience was sufficient to prove a high testimonial to his power. The attention of the hearers was sustained fully, and at times his vivid and forcible illustrations excited a thrill of solemn feeling. He succeeded, I think, in impressing deeply on the minds of all, the amazing majesty of the divine law, and the alarming condition of every impenitent man. As far as I remember now, the sermon did not close with a very full reference to a method of salvation. I remarked to him at the time, that it was a pity he had not blended with his successful and truly alarming appeals some closing suggestions to direct the mind to the Saviour. It seemed to me at the time that he was unconscious how skillfully and successfully he had harrowed up the minds of his hearers with pointed truth, and that this might account for the absence of a more evangelical appeal at the close; he did not seem to know how necessary his sermon rendered a reference to Christ. His manner and style were both intensely earnest; not violent or spasmodic and yet so energetic as to present a striking contrast with his slender form."

In reference to the criticism which this judicious writer has made upon the conclusion of Mr. Homer's sermon, it may be remarked, that the error specified, if it be an error, was one of principle, rather than an oversight in practice. Singleness of view, unity of impression,

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was an especial aim of Mr. Homer in his sermons, and he disliked to admit into his peroration any thought or sentiment which varied, even in its shading, from the spirit and genius of his discussion. He often spoke against the practice of closing a sermon designed for Christians, with an exhortation to sinners, and *vice versa*. He was fearful of weakening one impression by an attempt to make another, and if he succeeded in leaving a stamp upon the mind by any single appeal, he chose not to efface it by adding a new stamp, however excellent in itself.

This sermon was preached to his own people at South Berwick, Dec. 6, 1840; at the Baptist church in South Berwick; at Kingston; Great Falls; and Exeter, N. H.

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SERMON XIII.

THE CHARACTER AND THE REWARD OF ENOCH.

AND ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD; AND HE WAS NOT, FOR GOD TOOK HIM. Gen. 5: 24.

THIS precious relic of antediluvian history occurs in the midst of one of those genealogical tables so frequent in Jewish annals, and so useful in preserving our Saviour's lineage. It is remarkable for several reasons. It is the only record of religious character in the regular succession of the patriarchs down to the time of Noah. Enoch was the seventh from Adam. Of his great progenitor, subsequently to the fall, our account is extremely limited, presenting only the enumeration of his children and his years. Of the other patriarchs it is simply recorded that they lived, and that they died. Of Enoch, however, the historian attempts to draw a more full and accurate portrait. This portrait is interesting as it presents the spectacle of a good man, in the midst of a corrupt and degenerate age. The sacred history informs us, that the depravity of man was now fearfully increasing throughout the earth. The prevalent neglect of public worship among the descendants of Cain, the pride that was engendered in their hearts by the skill of such artificers as Jubal and Tubal, and by the physical strength of the giants in those days, and more than all the great age to which they

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lived, putting far off the thought of death, and giving to individual sin a gigantic growth, were among the circumstances which contributed to this alarming spread of corruption. But amid them all, how delightful the thought, that there was one, who "faithful found among the faithless," maintained a friendship with God, and carried in his holy life the seeds of the hidden church. This notice of Enoch is also interesting as it comprises a precious biography, with sublime conciseness in a single sentence, and as it holds up so simply and so beautifully the pattern of a perfect life, and a glorious exit. I know of no name in ancient history more worthy of christian emulation than the name of Enoch. It outshines not only the glitter of earthly conquest and secular renown, but it has a charm surpassing that of inspired story, where the venerable and the mighty and the gifted are the theme. It may be a peculiar fantasy of mine, but for myself, brethren, I would rather be Enoch in the solitary grandeur of patriarchal holiness, than David with princely crown, or Elijah with prophet's sword, or Isaiah with harp of majestic melody. There could not be a more soothing unction to my soul, than to have it come down from that dark, mysterious period, in sweet and simple record, "He walked with God—He was not, for God took him."

Our text presents the character of Enoch, and its recompense, each singular and striking in language and in fact. Let us consider the peculiar superiority of that life, and the nature and propriety of its reward.

I. We will consider the character of Enoch, and attempt to develope the significance of the description "he walked with God."

First, This language implies that he maintained habitual communion with God.

There is no reason to suppose that his communion was aided by any visible manifestations of his Almighty friend. Such peculiar intercourse between God and man was not un-

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common at that early period, but it seems to have been reserved for uncommon emergencies, and for the revelation of important promises or threatenings. It is hardly probable, that the piety of the early saints was dependent for its culture on what was tangible and palpable, and indeed the peculiar excellence of Enoch is ascribed by the apostle to that faith which is "the evidence of things not seen."

There is an affection which brings near to the heart the absent one, though long and far removed from the outward eye. Should the visible world be completely shut out from view, the ever-living love would of itself make a spiritual presence within the soul. And those thoughts that dwelt only on the distant, would bring the distant near. Then let the outward eye be opened, to gaze not on cold and vacant objects, but upon scenes of nature which were all associated with the departed; let the green fields be the same through which he has walked with us, and the blue heavens the same on which he has gazed with us, and from each flower and tree the voice of the absent will speak to us, and from each star the face of the absent will look down on us; then let a real communication be maintained with the departed, by messages of love, and records of history crossing the land or the sea, and bringing back tidings and tokens which the well known hand has sealed, and how perfect may be the communication between human beings in their hours of separation, how they may walk together, though invisible and inaudible and far asunder. Now here have we a faint image of Enoch's communion with God. The pious love which he cherished towards his Maker made a divine presence within his own soul, and he could walk with God as the divine Spirit revealed itself to the eye of that inward faith. When he looked abroad it was upon a creation every object of which was associated with the same invisible friend, and he could walk with God as he revealed himself in the lives of holy brethren among the patriarchs, or in the mark upon the forehead of Cain. All nature as it un-

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veiled its charms to the young eye of the antediluvian, was as the voice of God speaking to him in flocks and in harvests, from every winding river, and from every shady wood. Then he communed with God by intercourse still more direct. Though no blazing summit invited him upward to talk with his Maker as a man talketh with his friend, though no temple welcomed him with priestly robe within its holy of holies, he prayed to God in his solitary tent, in the communion of the patriarchs, at home and abroad; and when he mingled with men, his face shone like the face of Moses coming down from the mount, and the answer sent back from his Almighty friend was richer than that which descended on the house of Aaron when they ministered before the altar. Not alone in the communion of love, in the revelation of outward nature, but by prayer did Enoch walk with God.

Secondly, It is implied in Enoch's walk with God, that he studied the divine character.

In our earthly friendships, we are never satisfied till we are thoroughly acquainted with each other's souls. There is a jealous curiosity almost always accompanying an ardent attachment, which is restless to discover each plan and purpose, and must know the inward feeling that mantles the face with joy or with gloom. We never feel that friendship is consummated till there is that perfect unbosoming of character, and "as face answereth to face in water, so the heart of man to man."

Now there is no reason to suppose that Enoch's piety was of that unintellectual character, that he could enjoy the society of his heavenly Friend without the exercise of thought. Indeed he could walk with one invisible only as he was acquainted with his attributes, and his increasing intimacy and affection must have led him to aspire after more extended knowledge, and to search into the deep things of God. The opportunities for theological study at that early period may have been extremely limited, but he could have prose-

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cuted his researches without the aid of a prophet's school, or a learned library, or a systematic creed. His proximity to the period of the creation made him more intimate with the great first cause, and he could look back to that immediate exertion of Almighty power, as an event less distant than it is to us. Adam died only fifty-seven years before Enoch's translation, and Enoch probably enjoyed the society of that remarkable man for more than three centuries. From Adam's own lips he could learn the story of the creation, he could become acquainted with the primeval bliss of Eden, he could ascertain that law of paradise under which our first parents sinned and fell, he could look with familiar gaze into the dark problem of the origin of evil. By a more minute acquaintance with the events of that mysterious period, he could attain a clearer insight than we into the operations of Providence, and the wisdom of those counsels which were developed in the ruin of the human race. He had moreover the book of nature ever open to him, and those works through which he communed with their divine author were peculiarly rich in illustration of the divine character. In his own sanctified and inspired consciousness he had another and better source of sacred knowledge, and favored as he was by the teachings of that Great Spirit whose society he cultivated, he was no doubt as highly venerated for the extent of his attainments as for the depth of his devotion. The patriarchs consulted him as their oracle, the antediluvian scholars treasured up his sayings. Whatever may be thought of the oriental traditions, which ascribe to him the invention of letters and learning, the literal import of his name implies that he was *initiated* into rare mysteries, and one of his predictions as it is preserved to us by an inspired apostle, discloses a reach of vision which from that remote period, the very beginning of the world's history, could look down through all the lapse of ages to the very last event which is the subject of prophecy, the final judgment of the ungodly.

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Thirdly, It is implied in the description of Enoch, that he was a co-worker with God.

We always look for some active development of love in those who profess to be our friends. What we chiefly demand is a sympathy in our pursuits, a coöperation in all our plans, a willingness to aid us by strenuous and even self-denying exertions for our welfare. We cease to walk with that man as a friend, who is always professing his regard, and deriving a kind of enjoyment from our society, if he never stir himself to forward our plans, and in the hour of need remain sluggish and cold. We suspect the motives of such a friendship, and we turn away in disgust from a selfishness that can love us for its own satisfaction, while it will not lift a finger to do us good.

Now I see no reason for a common idea of Enoch's walk with God, that it was a cloistered and passive piety, into which he retired, to enjoy the society of his heavenly friend. I do not believe that he secluded himself from earthly duty, and led the life of a hermit. I suspect that he would have forfeited his claim to that blessed friendship, if he had shrunk away in cowardice from a wicked world—or that a voice would have sought him out in his seclusion, like the voice that reached the hunted prophet of Israel in his cave—"What dost thou here Elijah." The very import of the phrase in other parts of the bible implies an active devotion to service and to toil, and for our antediluvian priest and prophet there could have been no hesitating and reluctant discharge of duty; he must have held himself ready, waiting for the call of a master; he must have voluntarily sought out occasions of advancing those great purposes with which his intimacy with the divine mind made him familiar.

Enoch was faithful in his family, and to the world. Could we learn the history of Methusaleh, his first born son, we should see how a father's care and counsel had shed their influence on that life of nearly a thousand years. And we are

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assured by inspired tradition that he rose up fearlessly to reprove the flagrant sins of the age, and to vindicate the honor of his God from reproach. "Behold," was his bold and eloquent language, as he stood forth among the profane and the vile, the scoffers and the murderers, the contemners of God and the corrupters of man—as he walked among them unharmed, jealously contending for his almighty Friend, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Fourthly, It is implied in Enoch's walk with God, that there must have subsisted strong mutual complacency between him and the Divine Being.

"How can two walk together except they be agreed?" The discovery of mutual foibles will sometimes mar the warmest friendships, and that attachment is the most intimate and the most lasting which is grounded on reciprocal esteem.

Now there was evidently a peculiar love in the divine mind towards this faithful and devoted servant. The ancient translators of the Old Testament considered this the predominant element in the phrase, and as the best explanation of his walk with God, we read in the Septuagint version of our text, that Enoch *pleased* God. Paul also in the epistle to the Hebrews asserts that "before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." There was a delightful consciousness of the divine approval diffused through his life. Ever he walked under the smile of a Father with whom he was at peace. His sins were all forgiven, his sacrifices were all acceptable, he looked forward with the full assurance of hope to his final reward.

Similar was the satisfaction with which he contemplated the divine perfections. He admired that character the more

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he gazed and studied, and where its mystery baffled his search he bowed in humble adoration. He had stood at the grave of Abel, and wept over the early grave of purity and loveliness, but he never murmured at the darkness and gloom of death, for it was the portion which God assigned to his creatures. It was not for him to question the propriety of God's dispensations. He could not blame the Creator for not placing him in the garden, instead of Adam, and entrusting to his pure and obedient walk the destinies of the world. He found no fault that himself and his children were involved in that fearful downfall, as the consequence of eating an apple. No, his growing complacency towards the divine character hushed every uprising doubt, and he quieted himself in the sweet assurance, that the friend with whom he walked did everything right.

Such was Enoch's happy walk with God—so spiritual, so intelligent, so active, so concordant. Our earthly friendships are short-lived. Our devotion to God is fitful and inconstant. But that delightful walk was continued for more than three centuries, ever multiplying its blessed results upon his character and making his path like the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Such an intimate communion must have deepened his humility, comparing as he constantly did his own poor attainments with the perfection of his almighty Friend. It must have increased his holiness, exposing his own character to the searching gaze of that eye which cannot look upon sin but with abhorrence. There must have been in his own, a growing assimilation to the divine life, as the result of that heavenly communion. So he was found steadily persevering in that blessed career, when his reward came. He walked with God, and lo! he was not, for God took him.

II. Let us now proceed to consider the nature and propriety of his reward.

There have been three different opinions with regard to the translation of Enoch.

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It has been thought by some, that the narrative alludes to remarkable persecutions to which this servant of God was exposed, and to his deliverance from them by the divine hand. "He was not found of his enemies, for God rescued him." But an interpretation so frigid and unnatural, it is not worth while to examine.

It has been thought by others, that the text describes poetically the sudden death of Enoch, by which he was delivered from the pains of sickness, or the terrors of the last struggle. It is related of one of our revolutionary statesmen that it was his constant prayer that he might die a sudden death. I have stood by the shattered elm which suffered with that venerable hero from a lightning stroke. But a desire like this was too refined for an antediluvian patriarch, and such sudden and violent deaths, are more frequently in biblical history the tokens of divine displeasure.

The more probable opinion is the common one, that by miraculous interposition he was taken to heaven alive, without undergoing the terrors of death in any form. It is the express assertion of the apostle, that he did not taste death. His death moreover was premature. He did not live out one half of the portion assigned to the antediluvian patriarchs—and although it is the classic superstition that "whom the gods love die young," it was the prevalent notion of the Orientals that a long life was the mark of God's peculiar favor, while an early death was deemed the punishment for singular and enormous guilt. This cutting off of the holy patriarch in the midst of his years, in the bloom and vigor of life, when he was a young man only 365 years old, must have been a miraculous transplanting of his existence into another and better world. Not that he could have entered heaven with his terrestrial body unchanged, but by some mysterious process as the Jewish Rabbins described it, "he was disarrayed of the foundation corporeal, and clothed upon with

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the foundation spiritual,"—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, without the purifying transformation of death, "he was fitted for paradise, to gaze on the river of life, and pluck the goodly fruits of the garden forever." Let us consider the peculiar propriety of such a reward.

First, The good man had become so sensitive to the evil of sin, that it must have been extremely painful to continue longer in a world so deeply depraved. His intimate communion with God was ever deepening and purifying his piety, and the holier he became, the more intense was his abhorrence of iniquity. He was sensitive to the remains of it in his own nature, and to his divinely illumined eye, the personal transgressions which before had escaped his notice, stood up like mountains. He was pained also by the outbreakings of presumptuous sin in others. He was daily doomed to hear the scoffs and blasphemies of the ungodly, to witness the proud career of rebellion as it stalked in giant strides over the earth. He was jealous for the honor of his almighty Friend, and his ear caught up each sound of wrong and outrage, and every breathing of impiety sent a pang to his pious heart. "That righteous man dwelling among them in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." How fit that to such a one the day of deliverance should have been at hand, and that midway in the journey of life, he should have been caught up to the pure air and the cheering society of heaven.

Secondly, His imperfect communion with God led him to pant for something more intimate. Delightful as had been his devotional intercourse with his heavenly Friend, deep as had been his insight into the divine character, ardent and untiring as had been the devotion of his powers, he felt that there were barriers, in his nature, which kept down his lofty aspirings, and pushed back the energies of which his soul was capable. He felt such delight in the partial manifesta-

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tions he had already received, that his bosom heaved with irrepressible longings that the image might be completed, and the ceaseless cry of his soul was,

"Oh! for a closer walk with God."

He panted for such union with God, as would dim the vision and bewilder the spirit of a mortal. He longed to look in with a familiar gaze on those sacred mysteries which are hidden from human curiosity. He looked forward with eagerness to a sphere of exertion, where he should not stand up alone and unavailing against the arts of the world, but where newly endowed he should enter on some more successful and glorious mission for his king. His eye looked upward with no selfish impatience, but with strong and holy desire. He felt assured of the immortality of his being, and of its lofty destination; but he bowed in faithful submissiveness, and said, "all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." He was in a strait betwixt two, when he looked to earthly duty he chose to perform it, because it was his Father's will, but yet with Paul he said from his inmost soul, "to depart is far better." And how fit that those longings should have been early consummated, in the disrobing of the corporeal veil which obstructed his vision—when he was not—not in the gloom of spiritual famishment and dimness—not in the hard lot of the laborer who casts his seed upon the rocks, for God took him to himself, to the light and the nutriment of heavenly society, to the mission of angels.

Thirdly, Before the christian era, death was probably an object of greater dread than it has been since. Of all the patriarchs and prophets under the old dispensation, we read not of one who died in triumph. Of the antediluvian saints it is simply recorded that they died. Of Abraham and Isaac, it is only written, that "they gave up the ghost in a good old age, and were gathered to their people." Jacob and Joseph

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depart with brilliant and delightful visions of prosperity for the nation, but they die and give no sign of exultation for themselves. Throughout the poetical parts of the bible, the gloomiest figures are those connected with the grave, and if there are passages which express the longing for a future life, they are so few and so far apart as to evince that immortality had not yet been fully brought to light. The hope of heaven had not become so sure and so definite that it could throw its charm over the sepulchre, or light up the chamber where the good man met his fate. It did not assuage the pang of bereavement, it did not kindle rapt visions in the dim eye, or call forth strains of music from the faltering tongue. And the few, the favored ones whom God honored with a triumphal departure were not left to tread the dark pathway to heaven, but were caught up at once to meet him in the air. This was the reward of Enoch—that he should not lie down to a doom that was dark and hopeless, and enter through the tribulation of the last struggle into his final rest, but that he should be clothed on earth with an immortal nature, and without stopping his earthly song, the music of heaven should be breathed upon his ear.

Fourthly, At the commencement of the world's history, such an indication of the soul's immortal existence as was given in the removal of Enoch was an important part of the scheme for enlightening and saving man.

It was not God's design to leave the old dispensation in utter darkness. The light of a few examples, he afforded to animate the faith, and dispel the gloom of his chosen. If it did not make the death scene glorious, if it called forth expressions of hope but seldom and faintly, it kept the righteous from despair. The death of Abel startled the world into a fearful consciousness of what death was. They gazed on his pale face, they felt of his cold limbs, they buried his useless frame. The voice of his blood cried from the ground in words of terror and vengeance, but no voice came from his ransomed

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spirit above, to bring peace and hope to those who looked forward to the same fate. Being dead he yet spoke, but he spoke of the favors which God imparts to a righteous man on earth, rather than of the rewards which he dispenses to the saints in heaven. But the translation of Enoch was a new chapter in the spiritual prophecy. "He was not"—men met not his face in their familiar walks, they ceased to hear his voice of faithful exhortation, but they had not gathered around his death bed, or carried him out slowly and heavily from his tent, or found his bones upon the mountains. He was not among them, but they knew that he was not dead. "God took him." There is then a home for the righteous soul with God, there is existence beyond the earth, there is reward for the faithful; and why not, was the ill-suppressed though faint whisper of ancient piety, why not look forward to the abode of Enoch as the mansion of all the blessed. "That little candle" threw its beams down through the ages of patriarchal and national history. It inspired the harp of David when he sung, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Even Job caught a glimpse of that glorious resurrection which it has been supposed to typify, and exclaimed in rapt and holy enthusiasm, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God."

The discourse will be concluded by two brief reflections.

First, There is nothing in Enoch's character which may not be imitated by modern Christians. He communed with God by faith, by sight, by prayer. So can we, for we have a surer word to inspire our faith, we can see God in richer and more glorious works, we can approach him by a new and living access to the throne of grace. He studied the divine character, and sought to grow in knowledge while he grew in piety. So may we, in the light of a clearer revelation, and a wider experience than he could consult. He sought to do the divine will—in labors and toils for his master, most

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abundant. So may we, with higher advantages for pious activity, with a better soil on which to work. He was the *friend* of God—but "behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the *sons* of God." Oh! my brethren, with all this superior light, with the new and loftier claims of spiritual adoption upon our souls, how few Enochs are there among us walking with God—thus spiritually, intelligently, actively, harmoniously walking, and panting for a purer and better portion in heaven.

Finally, The death of a Christian "who walks with God," is more glorious than the translation of Enoch. It developes clearer and larger views, and exercises a brighter faith which can triumph even over the agonies of dissolution. Could the antediluvian saint have gazed in prospect upon a christian death scene, could he have entered the chamber lighted with gospel promises, could he have seen hope brightening up in the midst of weakness and pain, could he have heard such blessed words as often come from the lips of the dying, could he have seen death robbed of its sting, and swallowed up in the victory of the joyous and ransomed spirit,—could Enoch have known all this, he would not have asked for the privilege of miraculous translation; he would not have been ambitious for a seat in Elijah's chariot; he would not have sought to bring back the cloud on which Jesus went up, that it might bear him also into heaven, but his prayer would rather have been, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

NOTE.

This was one of two sermons which Mr. Homer wrote in a single week. It was preached at South Berwick, Dec. 27, 1840.

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SERMON XIV.

THE DUTY OF IMMEDIATE OBEDIENCE TO THE DIVINE COMMANDS.

I MADE HASTE, AND DELAYED NOT TO KEEP THY COMMANDMENTS.—Psalm 119: 60.

THE Psalm from which the text is taken, is peculiar both in its structure and its style. It was probably written near the close of David's life, and comprises a collection of choice memoranda from his experience. Particularly is it rich in the variety of its commendations of the law of God, as the object of his love and his obedience. There is no connected train of thought through its different parts, and it has been aptly styled a vase of jewels, rather than a golden chain. Yet so significant and suggestive are its expressions that the mind dwells upon each isolated clause, and reads volumes in each recorded meditation. The writer in his alphabetical arrangement, designed not so much a display of mechanical skill, as a mode of impressing upon the memory each one of these living oracles.

Prominent in the Psalmist's experience was the trait alluded to in the text. No proof of love to the law was superior to this—the promptness with which he had complied with its requirements. He remembers how the beauty and fitness of God's claim upon him were presented to his mind in childhood, and how unhesitatingly he had yielded to the demand.

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With him there had been no lingering among the pleasures of youth, no pushing aside of the heavenly visitant to the opportunities of a riper season. And now in his old age, sitting down to enjoy the reminiscences of the past, to collect the scattered fragments of his spiritual life, this bright reflection starts up as the prelude of his history, and sends its light through the whole train of his experiences;—"I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments."

I speak perhaps in the hearing of some who can adopt this language as their own. It awakens a refreshing sympathy in their bosoms. They remember with joy their early consecration to God, and the reflection lights up the whole memory of the past. I speak in the hearing of others who obeyed indeed, but only after long delay. Day after day they neglected the call of the Spirit, and clung to the world amid ten thousand inducements that would have drawn them to God. And now they are amazed at the folly and madness of that delay. They see how fearful was the risk they incurred, how great are the privileges they have lost forever; and they want words to describe that grace which can pardon such aggravated iniquity. They would give worlds, could they begin life anew, and devote that wasted portion to the services of piety. I speak no doubt in the hearing of a number who are now procrastinating sinners. They know their duty, but they defer its performance. They yield to the sluggish tendencies of their nature, or to some sinfully-suggested views, or to some delusive promise of future opportunities. To all such I wish to hold up the wisdom of the Psalmist's example, and to show that God's command to repentance ought to be obeyed immediately. I shall consider as admitted the propriety of repentance at some time or other, and shall confine my remarks to the importance of *immediate* action.

I. I remark that it is the dictate of the human mind to discharge with promptness those duties to which any one of the three following considerations may apply: the possibility of

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performing the duty *now*, the advantages of performing it *now*, the uncertainty of ever finding another opportunity for performing it.

First, The immediate performance of the duty should be seen by the mind to be possible. There are some duties which from their very nature require delay. They have to be looked at prospectively; and with regard to them, there can be no sense of present obligation. There are some other duties which require long meditation to satisfy the mind of their importance, and a long course of preparation before it is possible to perform them. In such cases the disposition to promptness is manifested by immediately directing the mind to the subject, and immediately beginning to prepare for the work. But when the soul clearly perceives the duty of the present time and the possibility of its immediate performance, that consideration alone may be sufficient to excite it to action. Apart from the calculation of benefits to be secured, apart from the prospect of future hindrance, it is the instinctive dictate of the human mind in its best state to do the duty now. There is a feeling of restlessness natural to man while such a possible work is left unexecuted. There is a feeling of self-abasement and dissatisfaction so long as a single account remains uncanceled. The mere sense of present duty calls for action with an immediateness that knows no delay. And that is the best and the wisest man who yields to these demands the instant they are admitted by the conscience, even though there is no interest to allure, and no danger to impel him to obedience.

Secondly, This disposition to promptness is greatly stimulated by the prospect of peculiar advantages which may depend upon it.

Sometimes the advantages relate to the duty, and not at all to the time of its performance. They can be secured as well by future as by immediate action. But when advantages may be obtained to-day, and if neglected now may be lost forever,

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the dictate of wisdom is to improve the present moment. Thus the tradesman though his note becomes due at some future period, will often be at great pains to forestall his payments, that he may prevent the accumulation of interest, and secure confidence and respect for his habits of business. The general who finds a breach in the walls and the garrison asleep, although he might make the assault to-morrow with success, urges his troops to an immediate onset; because he knows that victory will be easier before the guards wake up and the breach is filled. The physician may be confident that his patient will recover if attendance be postponed a few hours, yet, if a little delay will protract the process of cure, and leave the remnants of disease to be struggled with through life, he makes haste to the bedside, and administers the restorative the instant it can be procured. The dispenser of charity may believe that life can be sustained yet longer amid the peltings of cold and the craving of hunger, yet, because he knows that another day of misery is added by his tardiness, and that day might be made one of joy to the famishing and shelterless circle, he hastens this moment to the scene of suffering with the bounty in his hand. And that man is always ridiculed who comes up to the work, successfully it may be, but not till after its harvest season is over, and its first fruits have lost their freshness to the taste.

Thirdly, There is a still greater incentive to immediate action, if it be probable that the present is the only opportunity for acting at all. If it were possible to resist the present call of conscience, or the demands of interest, where is the man who would delay to act with the prospect of failure staring him in the face. If the debtor feels insecure as to the permanence of his abilities, he makes no delay in his payments, lest to-morrow he go home with ruined credit and blasted reputation. If there is a dying man to be brought back to life, there is hurry in the physician's step. When the prospect is that the poor may perish if exposed to the in-

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clemency of another night, no storm can keep back the charitable visitant. Here is the greatest incentive to human action —the despair of future opportunities. How it nerves the arm to-day, to think that it may be nerveless to-morrow. How it quickens the step in pursuit of an object, to imagine that hereafter the path may be obstructed, or the power of pursuing it lost, or the object itself removed beyond the reach. Boast not thyself of to-morrow, is the dictate of human as well as divine wisdom; and if the man were deprived of every other motive, the uncertainty of the future alone would be enough to impel him, with anxious brow, with agitated and nervous energy, with the combined powers of the whole man, to seize the present instant for the discharge of its great duties.

Suppose now a duty in which all these circumstances were combined; suppose the individual were urged on by the pressure of present obligation ever bearing him down with its iron weight, and admitting no relief but from instant action; suppose moreover that as he tried to shake off that burden, there should come up before him the array of joys and privileges to be secured by an immediate movement, and to be lost forever, if such a movement were not made; and suppose as he turned away from the spectacle in hope of discovering some "loop-hole of retreat," there should start upon his vision the prospect of despair for the future, and the thought of the last opportunity gone forever should haunt him; —what would be thought of a man so importuned by circumstances, so hedged in by motives, if he should still break away from every influence, and rush on in his career of neglect. But just such is the condition of the delaying sinner; for I propose to show,

II. That all these three considerations unite in the highest possible degree in the repentance he is urged to perform: first, it is a duty which can be done now; secondly, the high-

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est advantages in the universe depend upon its immediate performance; and thirdly, there is no security in delay.

First, The sinner cannot resist the pressure of present obligation by any idea of the absolute impossibility of immediate repentance. On the contrary all the circumstances connected with the duty show that it can be done now, and nothing but the desperate depravity of the heart, and the want of a willing mind prevents its immediate performance.

One of the circumstances which prove this, is the nature of the divine command, whether found in the word of God or in our own consciences. The direction of our Saviour is to all without distinction, sinners as well as Christians—"thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." It is not commanded to love him to-morrow; it is not commanded to begin a course of preparation which may result at some future time in compliance; but "thou shalt love;" and the command is echoed by the conscience of the sinner restless in his sense of disobedience, "thou shalt love." To him that is at ease in his sins, and has not God in all his thoughts there comes with still more appropriateness the mandate—"Repent;" and the present moment, and every moment claims this duty as its own, and urges the sinner to immediate action. The sense of obligation respects the present, and not at all the future. What is to be hereafter is not yet obligatory. And the sinner who says, I will repent to-morrow, neither obeys the command of scripture, nor satisfies the claim of conscience, but only makes an abortive effort, by a cheat, to rid himself of both. Now should we believe that God commands in this urgent manner what the sinner can in no way perform? That he drives him on by the voice from above, and the voice from conscience, to what is in every sense an impossibility? That he dooms him to the frowns of Heaven, and the lashings of remorse, when he knows that the sinner is absolutely and literally unable to do otherwise

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than as he does? We call that king a tyrant who commands us this instant to raise a burden which he knows we cannot lift. And what should be said of him who would lay a tax on the soul too grievous to be borne; a yoke which, so far from being easy, a burden which, so far from being light, are intolerable and every way impossible to be endured? There is nothing like this in the government of Heaven. Just and true art thou oh God in all thy words and in all thy works.

Another circumstance which shows the possibility of immediate repentance is found in the very nature of the duty. It is not one which finds no corresponding emotions in the soul of man. There is a sense of fitness within him which it meets. There is a panting after elevation which it gratifies. There is an aching void which it fills. We come to you who love the world with an unsatisfying, self-loathing fondness, and we point you to an object worthy of your highest capacities for affection. We come to you who are exhausted and worn out in sin, and we invite you to a service which can renew your strength, and remove your faintness and fatigue. The being whom we commend to your affection, is not one whom it is hard to love, unless the sinful will makes it hard. He is a being who loves you. He is not one that has withdrawn from your knowledge, and quite veiled himself in the majesty of his inscrutable perfections. You can see him wherever you go—in the mountain or the stream, in the earth or the sky.

> Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
> You are surrounded still with God.

Nor has he merely hung himself up in his universe like a picture to be gazed at and admired. To each one of you he comes nigh with proofs of his personal interest and affection. He is your father. Day by day has he watched over you with a tenderness that has not ceased even in your ingrati-

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tude. A mother may forget the child of her bosom, but God never forgets his erring, ungrateful offspring. Nor is this all. He contemplates your moral condition and prospects with unfeigned sorrow. Not willing that any should perish, he has multiplied motive upon motive for leading you to repentance. He has unveiled the glory of his character, to see if he could not attract your admiring gaze. He has sacrificed his Son to make known to you the strugglings of his omnipotent Spirit. Sometimes he has opened to you the terrific gates of wo, and you have heard the eternal sighing from which he would redeem you. And now this hour he comes once more with his entreaties of love—"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim?"

We point you to the character of Christ, the one altogether lovely. If there can be an object commending itself to the affectionate susceptibilities of your nature, you find it in the amiable and lowly Son of God. How fondly you would have admired such a child or such a brother; but the relation he sustains to you is more intimate and endearing. He is your Redeemer. Each step he took in his pilgrimage, the thought of you went with him. You accompanied him as he retired to the garden in the night of his agony, you stood by his side when the earth quaked in the spiritual darkness of the sufferer. The arms which were stretched out upon the cross were meant to bring you into the embrace of his redemption, and the sundered bands of the grave brought to you the liberty of a glorious resurrection. In those last words to his chosen on the morning of his ascension, his eye gathered time and space within the sphere of its vision, and fixed its serene gaze on every creature. And can you talk without self-reproach of an entire and absolute want of power to love him in his purity, when he deigned to love you in your vileness.

Nor is the service to which the duty of repentance calls

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you an unreasonable service. You are not called on to commence a pilgrimage requiring great forethought and preparation. You are not called to a perpetual seclusion from the world, before which you must "go and bid them farewell that are in the house." You have spent years in slighting the infinite love of God, and you are called upon to exercise penitence in view of the neglect. You have been living with low aims, and you are now called to the dignity of exalted and noble purposes of action. There is a glory in living for God and for the eternal destinies of the soul, which is worthy of your nature. And the exchange you are commanded to make, is one that commends itself to the instinctive and instantaneous judgment of every soul that will pause in its career of guilt and think.

Here then is the work of repentance. Begin to love God and to serve him. God is before you in all his perfection—does it require a long while for you to determine whether he is worthy of your love? Must you have time to count the cost before you can enter upon his service? Be not deceived. God is as lovely now as he ever will be, and his service is as good and reasonable a service. There can be no intermediate state between sin and holiness, no moral purgatory where you may sit down to undergo some process of purification, or receive some miraculous light into your soul. "He that is not for God is against him." The claims of this love and this service will wait for no such tardy workmen, but must pass them by as still unfruitful and disobedient.

Another circumstance which proves not only that the sinner can but may repent, is the divine aid which may be furnished him in the work. The sinner never will avail himself of his natural ability without divine aid. Notwithstanding the reasonableness of the claims of God, men have an obstinacy and a perverseness of will which prevent their yielding. God often sends his Holy Spirit to counteract

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this opposing influence; to make the truth a more vivid reality to the eye of the soul; to fix the gaze upon it with an intenseness that makes it hard for the sinner to break away from the attraction. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" but, blessed be God, the sinner may hope for a divine co-worker, and he need not despair. My impenitent friend, are you this moment listening with some degree of earnestness to this presentation of your duty —the Holy Spirit is directing your soul to the truth. Are you fixing your gaze on the lovely character of Jehovah—Jehovah himself is unveiling his hitherto hidden glories to your view. Will you not now resolve to be the Lord's? An Almighty influence may "work in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Without delay then, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Secondly, The advantages secured by repentance at the present time, are lost if the work is delayed to a future season. Even if the duty be subsequently performed it cannot be in circumstances so favorable as the present. Each fleeting moment carries with it opportunities which depart never more to return. And if it could be revealed that salvation in the end was sure, still he who could seize the passing instant to commence a life of holiness, would be the wisest man, because by delaying present duty he would lose inestimable benefits.

One of these benefits is implied in the very nature of the work of repentance. The sinner is now in a state of guilt, comfortless, remorseful guilt. He may pretend to be absorbed in the vanities of the world; he may affect gaiety amid the threatenings of God's law; but he knows, and in his serious moments, he will confess that he is not happy. He carries about within him an enemy that is perpetually warring with his peace. Amid the whirl of passion he hears a voice of terror. In the solitary night of the soul he is scared by hideous shapes. All his life-time he is in bondage. But

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repentance instantly breaks the fetters which bind him, chases away the spectres of his darkness, and the mild accents of a Father strike music upon his ear—My child, thy sins are forgiven thee. If he put off the work though it be only for a day, or a week, or a year, all the intervening time he must continue the victim of that terror and that servitude. When he looks up to God, there meets him a frown of wrath, rather than a smile of love. When he looks into his soul, there is not a ray of purity to relieve the prospect of total corruption. All this while, the burden is accumulating. All this while, the crucifixion of the Son of God goes on afresh. Oh! my friends, is it a light thing to be living under the anger of the Almighty, though it be but for a day? Is it a light thing to persist in wronging a father of your affections, though it be but another week? Is it a light thing to continue to trample under foot the blood of the covenant, though you may at some future period receive that offended one to your embrace, and wash in that fountain for uncleanness.

Another of these advantages is the immediate commencement of the work of sanctification in the soul. This is not the work of a day or a year, but of a whole life. Ask the aged Christian why he would wish a renewal of his youth, and a recommencement of his pilgrimage, and he will tell you it is because he would complete the process of maturing his christian character, and go home to God "like a shock of corn fully ripe in its season." And not only does the nature of the work render it one of long-protracted and strenuous exertion, but every moment of delay aggravates the difficulty of accomplishment. Perseverance in sin tends to deepen the corruption of our nature. The longer the indulgence, the harder is it to break up completely and radically the habit of transgression, and the weaker is the aid of those natural principles of good which have been shattered and worn out by perpetual opposition. The christian life is a warfare, not only requiring the longest possible campaign for its victorious

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issue, but dependent on an early beginning for the keenness of its weapons, and the ease with which the battle may be won. My friend, even if you were sure of your final salvation, how much better to begin now the work of self-discipline, rather than wait for the weakness of disease and the decrepitude of dotage, and then go home to heaven but a spiritual babe hardly fit for the Master's service.

Another of these benefits is the immediate change in the influence exerted upon others. "One sinner destroyeth much good." We are creatures of example. No one can estimate the immensity of the good or the evil he may do his fellow-men. A single individual obscure and weak, has power over a multitude that no man can number; and power that is eternal. Each moment of our existence may be fraught with the destinies of thousands whom we have never seen. I know of a Christian, in a comparatively humble walk in life, who never dreamed of acting beyond the narrow sphere which God seemed to have appointed her; but when she died, a voice went forth from her grave which was heard all over the mountains and vallies of her native land, and crossed the ocean to shed the "undecaying sunset" of her example upon the old world, and make multitudes of every tongue "rise up to call her blessed." And what is true of the power of religious influence, is truer still of the influence of sin; because the depravity of man is fitted to receive and cherish the unholy impression. If the mysteries of this great subject were unfolded to our view, and we could see the separate links in this invisible chain, what truths would it not disclose of the power of the weakest. The pollution that defiles a family or a neighborhood or a nation, might be traced back to a solitary thought in the bosom of some obscure individual who lived ages and ages ago. But that was no solitary thought. Though it did not express itself audibly in words; it spoke forth in the louder language of the eye or the life, and waked into being kindred thoughts in the breasts of others, to go on to

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their work of devastation and death forever. But, my friends, each one of you may be destined to a work for God, as distinguished as you are now performing for sin and wo. If your name is not known, your character will be felt. The secret aspirations you put up in the depths of your soul after holiness and communion with God, may be the first link in a golden chain that connects you with the ends of the earth. Ages and ages hence, some fellow saint on the plains of heaven may trace back his own conversion to the impulse you started by this day's repentance, and may point you to a multitude whom himself has called to share your blessedness. The man who repents, if it may be, on his death bed, after a long life of disobedience to God, has to go to heaven with the reminiscence of days and years, each moment of which has perhaps been fitting souls as precious as his own for destruction; and the evil of his life is living on in its undeviating career of mischief, while he is praising God among the redeemed. In this view, how important, my friends, is immediate activity. If you do hope for future opportunities as good for yourself, you cannot be so selfish as to care nothing for others whom your present course may ruin. Remember that the evil you may do, if you continue longer in sin, you can never undo, even though you hereafter attain the highest summit of perfection on earth, and the office of an archangel in heaven. Cease then this murderous career. This instant begin the service of God, and give the first impulse to a train of influences which may go on and gather an ever increasing light through the ages of a blessed eternity.

Thirdly, If the duty of repentance is neglected now, there is reason to fear that it will never be performed. If the advantages of the present opportunity are not heeded, how much less will be noticed the inferior advantages of the future. You who defer the work of repentance can have no well-grounded expectation of another period like this, but you perhaps imagine that the sudden providence of God may ar-

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rest your downward progress, or that the immediate prospect of eternity in sickness or old age may alarm you into religion. I need not reply by alluding to the well known uncertainty of your existence beyond the present moment. But how do you know that the providence you are anticipating may not deprive you of your reason? What hope can you cherish that you can terminate aright, on the tossings of your death bed, the struggle which now in the vigor of all your powers you terminate wrong? And old age—interesting old age—amiable old age—trust it not, trust it not in its decay and its dimness. You have seen the hoary-headed sinner full of self-gratulation for the past, full of hope for the future. Not a cloud dimned the brightness of his reminiscences, not a cloud hung over his eternal prospects. Deluded old man! he had passed his fourscore years in empty pleasures, and now he had forgotten their utter emptiness. He had been without God in the world, but he did not remember his solitariness. He was tottering along with the phantom of an inane fancy in his embrace, and leaning on a staff that could not support him. Oh! if there be a spectacle in the universe for one to weep over with tears that can bring no relief, it will be such as you, sinner, will afford, if you delay the work of this hour until you are too old to appreciate its claims.

But aside from the uncertainty of life, the distraction of sickness, the blindness of dotage, there is another circumstance which increases the improbability of your future repentance. It is the accumulation of power which every habit of sin is acquiring, the longer it is indulged. Conscience is an easily offended monitor, and the reproof that is slighted to-day is more feebly uttered to-morrow, and the third day its whispers may be too low to wake up the lethargy of the soul. The sins which you cling to now, will cling to you hereafter, and the work which early attended to would have been comparatively like the putting off of a garment, will become at length like the plucking out of a right eye, or the cutting off

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of a right hand. God's spirit will come less frequently to the heart that is only hardened by his influences, and which at every slighted visit is the more strengthened to resist his future solicitations. Do not expect that amid all these discouraging circumstances, after this protracted career of guilt, a divine hand will be upon you to draw you back to the commencement of your journey; to remove at once the fixedness of your sin. The Spirit of God, when it acts at all, operates in harmony with your own agency. "It doth persuade" you, while you can listen and ponder and understand. It presents truth to the eye, and it fixes the eye upon it. The more dimned has become the vision by sinful indulgence, the more difficult will be the conversion by the truth. Ah! is there not such a thing as a total blindness even in this life, which no divine influence will cure. The spirit is kind and compassionate; it takes a long while to grieve him utterly away; but he will not strive forever. When the soul as it were immures itself in dungeon walls, he will find some crevice to let in the light; but when every aperture is closed, and the doors are barred and bolted with a strength that yields to no knocking, then sadly, indeed, but surely the Spirit takes his eternal flight. "There is a sin unto death." In every man's destination there is a limit beyond which if he go, he is lost forever. Could you visit the abodes of despair, many a wretched one could point you to the moment in his history when for the last time he rejected the proffered aid, and sealed his own doom. Oh! my hearers, who of you has reached this critical period? Mighty in sin, mighty in strength to cope with the Mightiest of all, with eyes that can hardly see; with ears that can hardly hear; with a heart that can hardly feel. Yet to-day, after so long a time, God comes to thee with a gentle voice. Hear you not the tenderness of his invitation as it falls upon your well nigh paralyzed sense? See you not the beauty of his truth, as he holds it up to your almost blinded vision? Do not the repentings well nigh "kindle

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together," even in your sluggish, death-stricken spirit? If you would rouse yourself to listen and to gaze, to love and to obey, this last mission might prove your spiritual birth-day. But if you still scorn and reject, you may not see him again till he is "laughing at your calamity," you may not hear him, till the sentence already determined is pronounced in your ear.

I have thus set before you, my friends, the urgent claims of immediate repentance. I see not that as rational beings, you have any way of escape. In the former part of the discourse you saw how promptly you would have acted in worldly concerns which called for your immediate exertion; and now you see that the call of religious duty is infinitely louder and more pressing. Oh! be not inconsistent. Deny not to the famishing soul that sustenance you bestow on the body. Take not from God the moments you give to man. Now you are able, abuse not the precious talent. Now rich is the prize held out to you, trample not the jewel beneath your feet. Shall I not add, now or never! for who knows but the dark uncertainty of the future to which you leave yourselves may prove certain and eternal darkness to your souls? The considerations here presented apply to the minutest divisions of time. You are not called upon to repent this year, this day, this hour, but this moment. Delay not an instant. Set not up points in the immediate future for action; but now choose, resolve, *do*. Now say in your heart, I will be the Lord's, and now be the Lord's.

NOTE.

The preceding discourse was the second which Mr. Homer ever wrote, and was preached at Sherburne, Mass. in the afternoon of the first sabbath on which he ever occupied the pulpit. "On that afternoon," as he writes to a friend, "I preached on immediate repentance, my plainest and homeliest sermon." It was afterwards preached at Boston, Salem-street church; at Durham, N. H.; and at South Berwick, May 3, 1840.

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ABSTRACTS AND NOTES

ON THE

CLASSICS.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

The first of the following Articles is an Abstract or a condensed translation of the "Prolegomena in Homerum" by Richard Payne Knight, Esq. The second is an Analysis of "Die Erfindung der Buchstabenschrift," pp. 85—122; by J. Leonhard Hug, D. D. Prof. of Theol. at Freiburg. The third is an Abstract of a Treatise "Ueber das Zeitalter und Vaterland des Homer," by Dr. Bernhardt Thiersch, Principal of a Gymnasium at Halberstadt. The fourth is a condensed translation of "Demosthenes als Staatsmann und Redner," by Dr. Albert Gerhard Becker, preacher at Quedlinburg. The notes which are added are a small portion of Mr. Homer's extensive criticisms upon the Greek Classics. Both the translations and the notes were prepared merely for Mr. Homer's private use, and are now published with but slight attempts to correct them, and with no important alterations.

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ABSTRACTS AND NOTES.

I.

ABSTRACT OF R. P. KNIGHT'S PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS UPON THE POEMS OF HOMER.

1. The Doric invasion of the Peloponnesus occurred eighty years after the destruction of Troy.

2. The Grecian Refugees went first to Boeotia and Attica, and afterwards to Asia. Here cities sprang up, and as the fruit of their rapid refinement, the Homeric Poems appeared.

3. Nothing is known for a certainty concerning the authorship of these poems. In the revival of letters six hundred years subsequent to the Doric invasion, the Greeks could arrive at no definite conclusions.

4. It is now generally believed that Pisistratus first reduced to writing, and arranged the scattered fragments of the Iliad and Odyssey in their present order. But this belief is founded on an uncertain rumor first mentioned by Cicero,* and is rendered highly improbable from the circumstance that Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato and Aristotle make no mention of it.

5. Another circumstance which has given rise to the belief, is the fact mentioned in the Socratic dialogue entitled Hipparchus, that that prince or some of the family of Pisistratus first compelled the Rhapsodists at the Panathenaea to sing the rhapsodies in their regular order, rather than in the confused manner to which they had been accustomed.

6. Besides the Iliad and Odyssey, twenty minor poems were among the ancients attributed to Homer.

7. But eminent among all were the Iliad and Odyssey referred to one distinguished poet of remote antiquity. There were not wanting those who doubted whether one poet was the au-

* De Oratore, Lib. III.

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thor of both, but none went so far as modern Germans, to hold that they were both but a string of fragments from a large number of poets.

8. The opinion was first broached by Hedelin and Perrault, afterwards by Wolfe and Heyne, which last individual exceeded all his predecessors in the extravagance of his views.

9. It would seem most astonishing, if that age could indeed produce so large a number of unequalled poets, and still more so that their productions could be strung together into such a harmonious whole.

10. The supposition of a Universal Chance would be not more absurd, than that of such a fortuitous collection of fragments in Homer.

11. As a fair specimen of the arguments of Heyne, take that which he derives from the *ἀσπιδοποιΐα*, the episode on the shield of Achilles. He holds that its inappropriateness to the plan and spirit of the Iliad, its style, and the high order of the work described, all mark it as an interpolation, and the production of a later age.

12. So might a grammarian of Alexandria, or a critic of Göttingen decide, accustomed to judge from the rules of criticism rather than from feeling and fact.

13. Not so a poet, rude and simple in taste, and studious to please those more rude and simple than himself. His natural process would be to avoid a continued and tedious narrative, and to intersperse his work with episodes like the *ἀσπιδοποιΐα*. What matters it, if he makes the figures of the shield more suitable to Vulcan or Thetis than to the warlike Achilles? A discrepancy so delicate the hearer would neither censure nor perceive.

14. He would be more particular in suiting the actions and words to each character, than the armor.

15. Heyne's remark on the necessary priority of sight to conception, is true only of simple and primary ideas, but is contradicted in his application of it by what every school boy knows of the history of ancient art. Phidias borrowed his Jove from the poet.

16. It was nothing unnatural for the poet to attribute this wonderful and rapid workmanship to a god, nor did it become him to inquire into its modus. He studied to please. And so on another occasion, in the heat of the battle he sent Hector home to his mother. He could not have consulted fitness and probability here, but variety and pleasure.

17. Comparing this Episode with some of the productions of

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a later age, we see internal evidences of its superior antiquity. How different in grammar, language, manners and prosody from the *Batrachomyomachia*. And there is evidence that it was older even than the Odyssey, as the material for the strings of the lyre, the entrails of oxen, spoken of in the Odyssey,* is more modern than the flax mentioned in the Iliad.†

18. Some critics consider Odyssey XI. 564—626 an interpolation, because they confuse the narrative of the necromancy, and make Ulysses, instead of summoning the shades to himself, penetrate their abode. But the whole affair is involved in mystery, and Ulysses had before predicted his descent to Hell,‡ and afterwards boasted of it.§

19. Obscurity and confusion would add to the interest of the narration, and Virgil has as great incongruities, which might lead a critic to suspect whether different parts of his works were written by the same man, if his poems were more ancient than they are.

20. Heyne has attempted to show from Pindar‖ that this passage could not have been in the copies of the poet. But from the expression of the poet respecting Tantalus, it cannot be doubted that he had seen it.

21. The antique beauty of the language in this passage, proves its genuineness, and as it attributes the bow and not the club to Hercules, it could not have been the production of a later age.

22. The ancients demanded congruity in describing the objects of sense, but as to that which could be conceived only, they cared not for its congruity. Hence the obscurity and inconsistency of the descriptions of Olympus and Hades, and their inhabitants.

23. A similar objection has been made to Iliad III. 121—244, the scene between Priam and Helen. It has been said to be improbable that the old chief for nine years had remained ignorant of the countenances of the Grecian heroes. But the poet does not mind such trifles.

24. Heyne also thought that the ἀριστεία of Diomed was an isolated fragment. He did not consider how connected with it were the subsequent events of the poem—the meeting of Hector and Andromache—the wound of Paris—the rescue of Nestor—and the embassy to Achilles. Nor did he notice how ev-

* Odyssey XXI. 408.
† Iliad XVIII. 570.
‡ Odyssey X. 564.
§ Odyssey X. 12—21.
‖ Olymp. I. 91.

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idently in his soldier-like demeanor in III. 401—2, the poet was preparing us for his exploits in V. 1—310, and his speech in IX. 31—49.

25. With regard to the duel between Hector and Ajax,* the critic's opinions are discrepant. At one time he says that it is a fragment, at another he accounts for the preservation of the heroes from its importance to the subsequent events.

26. There is a similar discrepancy in the criticism on the tenth and eleventh books, where he finds evidence that the first verses are both the close of an old and the beginning of a new rhapsody.

27. The tenth book must be considered as connected with the poem, because all its interest, its passions, its speeches, its allusions, etc. connect it so decidedly with the preceding.

28. The circumstances of the age demand completeness in the poem.

29. The eleventh book also cannot well be understood without considering its connection with the preceding, and is fraught with important consequences to the sequel.

30. This book aids that admirable economy which Heyne commends in the fourteenth book, in bringing Patroclus to the tent of Eurypalus.

31. The convocation on Mount Ida, following immediately upon the duel,† might be objected to on more probable grounds.

32. It cannot be doubted that there have been interpolations, but they are to be detected by comparing them with the spirit and style of the original. The poems themselves are our chief source of evidence and judgment, and not the opinions of criticism or tradition.

33. If we should admit that the poems were introduced in a fragmentary state into Greece, it would be no argument against their integrity in Asia. We have an account of a Massillian copy complete, in the Alexandrian library. Herodotus speaks as though the poems were complete. And it might be shown that many of the interpolations were inserted for the express purpose of separating from one another originally connected rhapsodies, so that they might seem independent poems.

34. Several other of those state copies are mentioned by the Alexandrian critics, which, as Villoison thinks, were edited by the several states.

35. More probably, as Wolf thinks, they were the editions of

* Iliad VII. 17. † Iliad VII. 34, 35.

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private individuals, with the names of the states to which they belonged affixed.

36. To an advocate of the new theory it must be matter of surprise, that no Athenian edition worth mentioning was found in the Alexandrian library, and that Ptolemy, who purchased from the Athenians original copies of the tragedians at an enormous price, should show no desire to procure a copy of Homer from those who first published it.

37. Wolf attributes very much of the regularity and congruity of the Iliad to Aristarchus, while it is evident, as Heyne observes, that he understood neither the nature nor the prosody of the ancient tongue.

38. Undoubtedly from the rareness and costliness of writing materials, a copy of the Iliad may not have existed previously to the age of Pisistratus. It would not be impossible that it should be preserved by oral tradition, among a people who were polished, literary, and liberal patrons of the art of poetry. This indeed would not be so singular a phenomenon, as the preservation of the pretended Ossianic poems among a people like the Scotch. And it is not probable that the Aegyptians, who were better acquainted with the art of writing, would take pains to copy out works so uncongenial with their taste.

39. The story of Plutarch, attributing to Lycurgus the introduction of a written copy of the poems into Greece, may be attributed to the partiality of the biographer for Lacedemon, and to his gross ignorance.

40. The late commission to writing will account for the omission of the digamma, as the scribes would imagine it some obsolete sign of a semi-barbarous tongue, as remote from Homer's elegance as their own.

41. From the inspection of inscriptions and coins not much has as yet been done, but a wide field of research is open.

42. Hesiod in his poems has left us certain expressions from which we may infer his country and age. Homer has not done this. We learn his antiquity to be greater than Hesiod's, from the evident progression and refinement visible in the latter—the contraction of syllables, and the softening of sounds—(elidendo et molliendo articulationes).

43. For this reason the Odyssey appears more modern than the Iliad. Its manners are just as simple, but many of its words are more refined, and indicate a more advanced state of society. *Χρήματα* is here used for the more ancient *κτήματα*. Such words as *λίσχη*, *βύβλινος*, *ὅπλον* occur. *Θητεία* from *θής*

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is found, indicating a new order of society between slaves and nobles not mentioned in the Iliad.

44. Other words in the Odyssey assume a shorter and more elegant form, nearer the Attic smoothness. *Νώνυμος* is used for *νώνυμνος*, *θέσπις* for *θεσπέσιος*, *ἀγρότης* for *ἀγροιώτης*, *δόατα* for *δοάσσατο*, *γραῖη* and *γρηῢς* for *γεραιή*.

45. There is no material difference in the syntax except that *ἐπήν* has the indicative mood in the Odyssey, but never in the Iliad.

46. There is a difference in the mythology. In the Iliad no mention is made of Mercury as a messenger of the gods, of Neptune as trident bearer, nor Delos as an island sacred to Apollo, nor of consulting Apollo for oracles, nor of apotheosis.

47. The arts and sciences also seem more advanced in the Odyssey than in the Iliad. The strings of the lyre are no longer constructed of flax, but of the intestines of oxen, and the *κόλλοψ* is added. Columns are added to the buildings in approximation to the Doric style. The ocean is now first described as *ἄψοφόν* as if a more extensive navigation had made the discovery. The use of *αἰγυπιών* in bird catching, and *δίκτυα πολυωπά* in fishing, are now first mentioned.

48. Great accuracy is manifest in the Iliad in describing the localities, as if the poem was designed for those acquainted with them, and living in the vicinity. This is the more remarkable from the license manifest in other things.

49. The poet of the Odyssey on the contrary draws largely on his imagination for his localities, many of which are like the Liliput and Brobdignag of Dean Swift; and the principal place described, Ithaca, was so limited and remote, that he might describe it as he pleased without fear of contradiction.

50. The vengeance on the maid-servant, etc. is very unlike the spirit of the Iliad. But inferior as the taste and spirit of the poem is, in these respects, it is eminently elegant in its arrangement, and polished in its style.

51. Yet the same general rule is observed in both poems, accuracy in things known, license in things unknown.

52. To deny the Trojan war like Bryant, is as absurd as to deny the discovery of America.

53. None of the ancients denied the fact of the war of Troy, although few can suppose that the poet has given us the true origin and circumstances of this war, any more than Aristophanes has of the Peloponnesian war.

54. The war commenced probably in state rivalry, and per-

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haps in a desire to recover ancestral possessions from the Trojans, but it was as disastrous to the conquerors as to the conquered.

55. Neither the Iliad nor the Odyssey contains any allusion to a symbolic or mystical religion. Yet coins dated eight or nine centuries before Christ have impressions of the symbols.

56. No coins or letters are mentioned in the Iliad.

57, 58 and 59 relate to coins.

60. The definite article seems to have been used in the Iliad and Odyssey chiefly to accompany the action of the reciter, who indicated by the article what was present in the action.

61. Yet the ordinary usage of the article was ancient, as we see from the Latin words *terra* from τῇ ἔρᾳ and *Turmes* from τὸς ἑρμῆς.

62. Hesiod probably lived at the end of the tenth century before Christ. The Odyssey was written one hundred and the Iliad two hundred years before—at the time of the Ionic migration.

63. The glorious exploits of their ancestry would be grateful to the exiles, and the sad results of their quarrels would furnish a profitable lesson.

64. The overthrow of Peloponnesian cities is obscurely intimated.*

65. In no other way can we account for the long catalogue in the second book of the Iliad, than by the peculiar gratification it would afford to those just banished from the scenes described.

66. If we are pointed to the didactic nature of Hesiod's works and days, we remark that an agricultural poem would be more interesting than a geographical one.

67. The Iliad must then have been written between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries before Christ. Pseudo-Herodotus dates it six hundred and twenty-two years before Xerxes' expedition, 1102 B. C. Two emigrations are spoken of by chronographers; one, 1124 B. C., of the Aeolians, and another, 1404 B. C., of the Ionians. But Homer does not recognize this distinction of tribes.

68. The Dorians and the sons of Hercules their leaders who made the incursion, Homer does not mention, as if anxious to deprive his country's enemies of the glory of participating in the Trojan war, and Tlepolemus son of Hercules is an obscure prince, and killed first of the Greeks.

* Iliad IV. 51—56.

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69. The Doric language was a barbarous relic of the Lacedemonian—different from the Doric dialect, subsequently compiled from various sources for poetic use. The Aeolians and Ionians used one and the same dialect until after the dispersion, when it was variously corrupted. There were four varieties in the age of Herodotus.

70. Of all the dialects the Attic was the most refined and elegant, and the most remote from the simplicity of the original, though its elegance has given it the authority of an original.

71. The true original is the Homeric dialect, which was not compiled, as ancient grammarians supposed, from various dialects, but was the spoken language of the day.

72. At the time when the poems were committed to writing, this dialect had gone out of use, and the copyists, not distinguished for their cultivation of the antique, often varied the language to suit their own modern taste.

73. At that early period the metrical form was used to aid the memory, and the recitations of the rhapsodist took the place of books. The muses were represented as the daughters of Memory, and the poet invokes them as such in his catalogue of ships.

74. The custom of having an ἀοιδός attached to each distinguished family circle, is evident from the Homeric poems; and the more distinguished of these minstrels not content with private patronage traveled from land to land. This was the practice of Homer.

75. Hence the general cultivation and elegance of the popular dialect.

76. Eloquence too, from the very simplicity of the age, and from the fact that everything was done by speech, was much cultivated.

77. There can be no doubt that poets existed before the period of Homer; although they were entirely eclipsed by him, and the extant productions attributed to them are spurious.

78. Everything is uncertain relative to the origin of the Greek alphabet. We have nothing relative to Cadmus and the Cadmeans. The probability is, that Cadmus was the same as Camilus or Cadmilus, a surname of Mercury.*

79. No mention is made in Homer of Palamedes. No confidence is to be placed in the common impression that the "literae vocales duplicae" were not invented until the year 393 B. C. as the description of those letters in Euripides and Callias, and

* Apollon. Rhod. I. 917.

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upon coins of the fifth or sixth century before Christ prove an earlier origin.

80. In the fifth century before Christ, when the Greeks began to write prose histories, the Ionic dialect was in its vigor. Accordingly Herodotus wrote in it.

81. Owing however to the universal superiority of Athens, the Attic dialect subsequently became the prominent one, the one most cultivated by foreigners, and looked upon as the common language of Greece.

82. At this time the Alexandrian grammarians commenced their operations on Homer—discovering and collating old manuscripts. Zenodotus, first Librarian, edited a new edition on the basis of their labors, in the reign of Ptolemy II.

83. Under Ptolemy V, appeared the edition of Aristophanes, and under Ptolemy VII, in the second century before Christ, the celebrated one of Aristarchus, the basis of all subsequent editions.

84. The great fault of the Alexandrian critics was that they did not ascertain the true sources of the old Greek, nor cultivate an acquaintance with those foreign languages which contained its elements, but erased whatever was contrary to their own style of speaking.

85. Bentley and his successors did well to restore the digamma, but they erred in not extending their labors to other emendations in the orthography, as the digamma alone creates disproportion.

86. Priscianus makes the Aeolian digamma, a prefix of *B* to words commencing with *P*, as *BPΗΤΩΡ* for *ΡΗΤΩΡ*. But it is evident also that there was a custom of writing *AF* for *AB* and *AT*.

87. The digamma was called Aeolian, because it continued to be used by that tribe after it had fallen into disuse elsewhere; but there is conclusive evidence that it was used anciently by both Dorians and Ionians.

88. The accents were invented two hundred years before Christ, by Aristophanes a Byzantian grammarian, to teach the pronunciation of the more modern dialect to foreigners.

89. It is difficult to give the precise force of accents in pronunciation. The modulation indicated by them is of so delicate a character, that many disputes have arisen respecting it. Hermann makes the acute accent a sign of emphasis, and the grave a sign of no emphasis; but he is inconsistent with his own theory.

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90. The ancient languages, especially the Greek, as they approached nearer to nature, were more melodious in tone than the modern.

91. The peculiar beauty of the Homeric dialect was thought to be essential to epic poetry, and was imitated by others who followed, yet in so bungling a manner as often to obscure the sense and destroy the harmony of their compositions.

92. It can be shown that epenthesis and metathesis, etc. are mere inventions of the grammarians, and did not exist in the Homeric age.

93. The Homeric language was, it is true, an advanced state of the Greek, but from the lack of more ancient monuments, we cannot measure the advancement. Yet we cannot suppose the words to have been modified by arbitrary changes, but rather, in order to be universally understood, to have been the words used in common life.

94. The Alexandrian doctrine, which makes the contract form the primitive one, and derives, for example, *σόβω* from *σῶ*, and *βόλω* from *βῶ*, is no more proper, than to make the latin words *mavolo* and *mevolo* from *malo* and *nolo*, by epenthesis of *vo*.

95, 96. In the ancient language all words seem to have received an augment in the second case, either by the addition of a new syllable or the division of an old one. Example, *σῶμα σώματος, τριήρης τριήρεος*. And all nouns in *ις* anciently made this termination in *τος*, but they gradually softened down into *ηος*. This last termination is an invention of the grammarians.

97. The contracted syllable can be resolved only into its original elements—*ει* and *ου* into *εα* or *εε*, and *αο* or *εο*, not into *εϊ* and *οϋ*. So *κράτος* is resolved into *κάρατος*, and not into *κράατος*, etc.

98. Nouns ending in *ις* have their accusative in *ιδα* or *ιν*. The *ιν* comes in this way: *-ιδιν -ιδαν -ιδν -ιν*. The ending of latin genitives in *is*, results from a modern *ἰωτακισμός*. Formerly it was Venerus instead of Veneris.

99. So from this *ἰωτακισμός* they write Mithridatis instead of Mithridates; and the modern Greeks make *η, υ, ει, οι, υι* the same in pronunciation as *ι*.

100. Aspirated letters or gutturals were frequently interchanged for each other, as *σ* and *ρ*, *F* and *F*, *musarum* and *musarum*, *μουσάFων* and *μουσάF ων*.

101. Afterwards this was expressed simply by a period,

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μουσά.ων, etc. The Etruscans knew not the letter o. They wrote for *gnaros*, *gnarures*; hence the latin genitive *gnarorum*.

102. It has always been difficult to explain the genitive termination *οιο*. Some refer it to the Thessalian, others to the Boeotian dialect. But without doubt the *F* was used in singular as well as in plural words, and the dot which designated its absence would be changed into ι.

103. Thus *λόγοFο -λόγο.ο -λόγοιο*. The genitive *οιο* never occurs except where the *ο* is short by position as well as by nature, which indicates that *οι* was originally short.

104. Patronymics and verbals in *ας*, *α*, *ης* have one origin. The genitives *αος*, *εος*, *εο*, *εο* all come from *εFος*.

105. Nouns in *ευς* or *εFς* in Homer, retain in the oblique cases the original mode, no contraction occurring except in the dative plural.

106. Patronymics in *ειδης* and *ειδας* in Pindar, etc. appear *κατὰ διάστασιν* in consequence of the digamma.

107. Nouns in *υς* and *υ*, formerly made their genitive in *υFος*. Hence *questuvis* and *fructuvis* for *questibus* and *fructibus*.

108. Hence also *sibi*, *tibi*, *nobis*, *vobis*. So *ubi* from *F αFι*.

109. *F* and ι are often interchanged for each other. In declining nouns in *ις*, the Attics made *εως* for *νος*; hence *ως*.

110. Masculine adjectives in *υς* making their genitive in *νος*, made their feminine in *υια* and *ειια*—*ια* and *ιν* being an Attic refinement.

II.

ANALYSIS OF HUG'S ARGUMENT RESPECTING THE KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF LETTER-WRITING BY HOMER, AND THE UNITY OF THE ILIAD.

The shield of Achilles, the cup of Nestor, and the shield of Agamemnon seem to prove a knowledge of the arts of design in the heroic age. But as writing was no more used than among the knights of the middle ages, little or no allusion is made to it throughout the poems. Rousseau's use of this fact in the Odyssey, to show that the possibility of an epistolary correspondence between Ulysses and his wife would destroy the story, loses all its plausibility when we remember that the ar-

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rangements of Calypso's post office department may not have been very perfect, and a verbal message by the mail carrier might have been as useful as a letter.

The *σήματα λύγρα*,* even if they do not prove a knowledge of writing, prove, 1. A preparation for such an art, two generations before the Trojan war, which renders its speedy introduction highly probable, and 2. The existence of writing materials which might have been employed as well in writing as in marking, and as well in great works as in small. This fact evinces a dawn of the art, and it is very natural to suppose that Grecians who traveled in Egypt or Phenicia before Homer, or at least Homer himself, should have perfected the art.

Whatever may be said of the preservation in the memory of songs such as would naturally fix themselves in the mind, it is difficult to conceive how a purely statistical document, like the catalogue of ships, could be either composed or transmitted to posterity without the aid of writing. That it has been accurately preserved we may learn from the fact, that it has several times been referred to, to settle boundaries.† Such a document would be valued only by statesmen and geographers of subsequent ages, and would not possess that share of popular favor, which would occasion its frequent and general recitation. The laws which enjoined the commission of it to memory did not exist until the age of Solon, and while they fail to account for its original preservation, were particularly designed to preserve it from manuscript interpolation. At the same time, from the great difficulty attending the art at its dawn, and from the rareness and costliness of manuscripts so late as the time of Plato and Aristotle, it is reasonable to infer that no more of the Iliad was written out than was absolutely necessary. Oral tradition was no doubt at first the chief means of preservation. There were probably more who committed single rhapsodies to memory, than there were who committed the whole, and the more diffused was the knowledge of the art of writing, the less frequent was the commission of anything more than particular passages. The rhapsodists probably confined themselves to the most popular parts, until compelled by law to recite the whole. Such were the *disjecta membra* which Pisistratus was to reduce to order, and they must have been scattered fragments of single original poems, and not individual songs collected together to

* Odyssey, B. VI.

† Aristot. Rhet. Lib. I. c. 15. Eustath. in Hom. T. I. p. 263.

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frame two great poems, as will appear from an examination of the Iliad.

The theme announced by the poet, Achilles' wrath, does not necessarily confine him to that one event, but includes also the appeasement of his anger with its attendant circumstances. The poet makes this simple announcement of his subject, because he takes it for granted that it will be understood as comprehending all. The fact that the story seems to be sung rather than written, is no proof of the poet's ignorance of writing. It is one peculiar art of the poet to conceal from his readers the pains he has taken in writing and rewriting his performance. Episodes apparently unnecessary to the entireness of the plot, furnish no argument against the unity of the composition. What is *necessary* is not the scale by which to judge of a poem. The genius of the poet, and his regard for the taste of his hearers, might lead him to introduce much that is not strictly necessary to the plan proposed.

An analysis of the structure of the poem will confirm its unity. It might at first view be supposed that the catalogue of the ships would be as appropriate to any other epic of the war of Troy as the Iliad. But we find in the midst of it,* a description of Achilles peculiarly appropriate to the subject proposed for the Iliad, and in perfect accordance with its design, and this passage marks the catalogue as a part of the same poem. It is often said, that the account of the duel between Paris and Menilaus† is of itself a complete rhapsody. But this duel is a preparation for a general contest to be afterwards described, and is alluded to in the next book, and in subsequent parts of the Iliad, in a manner that proves it to have been an essential part of the entire poem.‡ The battle described in the fourth and fifth books may be said to have no peculiar fitness to the action of the Iliad, but to be any one among the many skirmishes which occurred during the war of Troy. But it is most intimately connected with the events of the preceding book from which it directly resulted; and besides Apollo appeals to Achilles' angry retirement from the field in order to encourage the fleeing Trojans to rally.§ A similar allusion to the present condition of Achilles reanimates the Grecians when they have become disheartened.‖ In this way the poet is constantly exhibiting his design, and the connection between the various parts is so intimate that one could not be omitted without another.

* B. II. 685. † B. III. ‡ B. IV. 155, 235, 269. B. VII. 351
§ B. IV. 509. ‖ B. V. 787.

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The sixth book, which relates the visit of Hector to Troy and his parting with Andromache, possesses in itself great interest, even when considered apart from the rest of the poem. But it cannot be separated from it; for 1. It has a most intimate connection with what precedes. It is the fact that Minerva is aiding the Greeks which brings Hector to Troy in order to enduce the matrons to appease the goddess. 2. It has a most intimate connection with what follows. In fact it gives an intirely new turn to the action. Minerva is appeased, and through her instrumentality a single combat between Hector and Ajax is determined on. 3. Ajax alludes to the wrath of Achilles,* and shows that the poet still keeps his eye on that circumstance. In the eighth book, Jupiter forbids the gods to interfere with the combat, takes it into his own hands, and this for the express purpose of avenging the wrongs of Achilles.† The ninth book presents the ineffectual effort to reconcile Achilles. The tenth, relating the night-adventures of Ulysses and Diomed, has been generally supposed to be an interpolation.‡ No doubt it possesses in itself an interest and a completeness amply sufficient. But 1. The unfortunate occurrences of the preceding day rendered the restlessness attributed to the heroes, and the plan devised by them for ascertaining the projects of the enemy, in the highest degree natural and probable. 2. The time is most exactly matched to the preceding book. 3. The conversation among the heroes appertains to the events of the preceding book, and their position is described with reference to it. 4. In the battle of the following day Diomed takes no part until he has had time to rest from the fatigue of his nocturnal adventure. 5. In this book also, the poet refers to the angry Achilles.§ The eleventh book relates the more fearful events which followed, and the night-scene furnishes suitable relief from the too rapid succession of horrors. It is now, in consequence of the dreadful ravages of Hector, that Patroclus is sent out by Achilles to reconnoitre, and is urged by Nestor to call his master to battle. The twelfth book continues the ravages of Hector, nor can any one doubt the connection of this with the poet's design, or the present direction of matters toward an issue. At this critical moment we might expect Achilles to appear for the salvation of the ships. But the poet has other designs in view and relieves us by a happy and un-

* B. VII. 226.
† B. VIII. 370—409.
‡ Eusth. II. 785.
§ B. X. 103.

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expected turn. Jupiter as if disgusted turns his eyes to more congenial subjects, and the eager divinities avail themselves of his inattention to aid the Greeks. This is the subject of the thirteenth book. The anger of Achilles is here again referred to.* In book fourteenth, the Trojans retreat. Neptune orders the Greeks to pursue them, and Juno puts Jove to sleep. All this takes place that Achilles may not too wildly exult.† Hector falls. We anticipate the immediate destruction of the city, now that its main bulwark is disabled. But the poet by another turn in the fifteenth book, puts off the issue. Jupiter awakes, and sends Apollo to reanimate Hector. The Trojans are revived. Here also we have two allusions to the wrath of Achilles.‡ In the sixteenth book Patroclus is sent out in the armor of Achilles, and repels the Trojans, but is slain and spoiled. In the following book occurs the contest for the body of Patroclus, and news of his death is sent to Achilles.

Wolf has suggested§ that the Iliad should terminate with the death of Patroclus. This event certainly furnishes a sequel to a portion of the story, which might lead those who doubted its unity to ascribe what follows to another hand. The subject proposed would necessarily require no more, now that the Greeks are so thoroughly humbled. But that the poem cannot here terminate will appear from the following considerations: 1. A Greek would not thus terminate the story while everything was so disadvantageous to his countrymen, but would rather have found an end in the ninth book, where, if his simple object were a close adherence to the theme proposed, an ample satisfaction would have been given. But the hero of the poem has not yet been so prominent as the subject would seem to demand. He has appeared in person but twice.‖ By concluding the poem here we shut out those portions where he is a prominent actor. 2. Should such a poem in seventeen books be found among the rubbish of antiquity, with the whole of the first book, half of the second, and half of the ninth defaced and illegible, the reader would at once conclude that it was an epic poem designed to relate the victories of Hector. Should he be informed that Hector was but the second hero, he would necessarily anticipate a large portion to follow which would bring into notice some rival of Hector's. 3. Such a

* B. XIII. 345.
† B. XIV. 139—365.
‡ B. XV. 400, 595.
§ Wolf's Prolegom. in Hom. p. 118.
‖ Bs. IX. and XVI.

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poem would also be wanting in proportion. The sequel would prove utterly inadequate to the preparations, and would fail to satisfy the mind with regard to the object kept constantly before it, the appeasement of Achilles. 4. It is exceedingly improbable that a poet addressing himself to the sympathies of the Greeks would thus engulph the interests of the nation in those of his hero, especially as in the sequel there is no change, and Achilles does not become again the joy and the pride of Greece. 5. If the poem closed with the seventeenth book, the hero only appears ridiculous. The whole machinery is set in motion to accomplish his purposes of vengeance, but in the end he loses his armor and his friend. Rather than a heroic poem, this would be a sermon on the folly of revenge. 6. In such a poem we should be left in doubt whether Achilles were reconciled and satisfied, although it would be evident that he had more cause than ever for anger in the loss of his friend. So the poet views it, and in the remainder, the revenge of the hero assumes a new form, acting in concert with the Greeks and against their enemies. 7. The splendid offers refused by Achilles in book ninth lead us to anticipate a still more brilliant satisfaction and appeasement of his anger. If the poet leaves him now, he treats him like an ugly child, who because dissatisfied with what is offered gains in the end nothing at all. 8. Achilles is the hero of the poem, and the grand object of the poet is to exalt and ennoble him. It is unnatural then to leave him just as the circumstances are such as to draw him out, and exhibit his character to advantage. 9. The nature of the Epic requires an *active* hero. A Hercules or Alexander at rest would form good subjects for painting or statuary, but not for history or epic poetry. We naturally expect Achilles to become active before the close of the poem. 10. The poet himself gives express predictions of such a change in his hero.*

The poet has not skillfully brought his hero into circumstances which will call him out to advantage. The circumstance that his armor is in the possession of Hector, gives his mind a definite object of pursuit. In regaining that, he avenges his friend by slaying Hector; and in slaying Hector, he assumes a prominence proper to his rank as hero of the poem. If it be said that the twenty-third and twenty-fourth books are superfluous, we must consider that the funeral rites of Patroclus seem to be required by the spirit of the age. And moreover

* B II. 694. B. VIII. 474. B. X. 105.

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the preceding incidents of the poem, the reservation of the victims of slaughter to deck the funeral pile, and the sympathy which the poet takes pains to excite for the loss of Patroclus, require this full and splendid description of his burial. The twenty-fourth book is important as it seems to consummate the glory of the hero by placing Priam at his feet, and developing so fully the finer feelings of heroism. The first and second parts of the poem have thus a similar termination. His vengeance on the Greeks ends in a magnanimous refusal of their presents. His vengeance on the Trojans in a restoration of the body of his foe, and a liberal allowance of time for the funeral rites.

Aristotle then has not erred when he praised the perfect unity of the Iliad. The very proposition of the poet (sein grundsatz) is a head of Medusa which turns to stone every audacious hand that would rob him of a single book. It is incredible that a poem at once so unique and so complete, so admirable in its construction, so perfect in its minutest details should have been produced without any aid from writing. It would be a miracle. To this art then is Homer indebted for his superiority over all predecessors.

III.

ABSTRACT OF DR. THIERSCH'S TREATISE ON THE AGE AND NATIVE COUNTRY OF HOMER.

Proposition. The Homeric Poems appeared in European Greece immediately after the Trojan war.

I. The Age.

The precise period of the Trojan war cannot be ascertained. Computations vary from 1284 to 1184 B. C.

Ancient writers differ much about the age of Homer. According to the Arundelian Marbles he flourished 277 years after the Trojan war, or 900 B. C. The calculation given in the life of Homer attributed to Herodotus, is not only inconsistent with that given in Herodotus' history, but with itself. It puts Homer 168 years after the Trojan war, and 622 years be-

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fore Xerxes crossed the Hellespont, which event occured 480 B. C. This of course drives us from the previous calculation respecting the time of the Trojan war 1184 to 1270 B. C. The circumstances of the narrative, and the character of the poetry it contains, prove that it is one of the Cyclic poets and not the true Homer whose life is here given. Plutarch, in his life mentions three opinions; one making Homer coeval with the Trojan war, another 100 years later, and another 150. Gellius makes him contemporary with Solon and Hesiod, Cornelius Nepos 160 years before Rome—900 B. C. Cicero is quite self-contradictory in his various conjectures on the subject. Madame Dacier puts Homer 300 years after the Trojan war. Payne and Knight make him coeval with the Ionian migration. Mitford puts Homer four generations after the Trojan war. Dodwell considers him a son of Telemachus. Wood makes different calculations. Wolf dates his time at 1000 B. C. Schubart places him in the court of the Aeneades.

The opinion that Homer lived after the Ionian migration has little foundation. 1. Its prevalence among the Ancients is easily accounted for, as the poems, being found among the islands of Asia, would not naturally be referred to a European origin. 2. Various incidents mentioned in the Iliad and Odyssey, particularly the appearance of bards at feasts in the latter, and the analogies of other lands, indicate the age of heroes and bards to be the same. 3. The omission, except in a single instance, of all allusion to the death of Ulysses, and the manner in which the history of Agamemnon's family is related, no mention being made of the fate of Orestes, intimate that the poet was nearly contemporary with his heroes. 4. If it be said that the poet transfers himself for the time being to the age of which he writes, and makes his heroes speak consistently, it may be replied that this is a stroke of art too great for the simplicity of the poet of a childlike age. 5. The song of the νόστος, relating the return of the heroes from Troy, is spoken of* as if it related to recent incidents. 6. From the Iliad and Odyssey it appears that there were bards contemporaneous with the heroes. Now it is unreasonable to suppose that the succession of bards was interrupted for two hundred years. It is impossible that the events of the heroic age could have been preserved without song. And the circumstances of the period immediately after the return from Troy, with the ease and luxury in which the

* Odyssey I. 352.

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heroes live, point to that as the most favorable period for these poets to flourish. 7. They must have appeared during the peaceful period of eighty years that elapsed between the Trojan war and the Doric invasion of Peloponnesus. 8. In proof of this, the freshness of the descriptions, and the lifesomeness of the scenes in the poems may be appealed to. These traits could not have been so prominent a century after the events related, when their impression must in a measure have worn away. 9. Especially would the circumstances of the Ionian migration have crowded from the memory, and from the mouth, the events of Troy, as oral tradition continues fresh only till the next wonderful event supplants it. 10. Nor can we imagine that a poet who wrote in the simplicity and artlessness of so early a period could draw a sketch of the past without betraying his own more recent age, by blending its features with the outlines of the picture. 11. No mention is made of the important events which occurred during the long interval between the Trojan war, and the Ionian migration, events which the communicative disposition of the poet would incline him to mention, as he does the heroes of the ante-heroic age.

If it be said in opposition to this view, that true epic poetry always selects distant and fabulous antiquity instead of seeking inspiration from the present time, we reply, that it is the artificial Epopoea of more modern times from Virgil to Klopstock which sings of antiquity. Not so the Homeric and Ossianic poems. The true theory is, that the *infancy of a nation is its original epic age.* Again, if appeal be made to Il. V. 304, *οἷοι νῦν βροτοί,* we reply, there is reason to believe that this passage is the interpolation of some rhapsodist. 1. Because it is unlike Homer who nowhere speaks of his *heroes as giants.* 2. The interpolation might naturally have been invented by a later rhapsodist to remove the strangeness of this sort of warfare. 3. There are several passages* which would require the same qualification, in which it seems to be omitted owing to the difficulty of making it harmonize. 4. The etymology of the word *χερμάδιον* throws suspicion on the passage. And if we are referred to the poet's appeal to the muses for aid in giving the catalogue of the ships, we reply, 1. That we cannot suppose the poet to be so superstitious as really to depend on such aid for recalling distant and forgotten events to mind. 2. Several critics attribute this passage to a later age, and consider it an interpolation.

* Iliad VII. 264.

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II. The Country.

Our view of this follows from the preceding, yet both may be confirmed by noticing some independent proofs.

There are numerous hostile theories relative to Homer's country.

1. Bryant makes his native place Ithaca, in proof of which he relies chiefly on the poet's love for Ithaca. The critic confounds the poet and his hero.

2. Schubart makes Homer a Trojan, and proves it from the superior polish and character given to the Trojans. He appeals to the pedigree of Dardanus,* which is more extended than that of any Grecian hero. But that passage is an interpolation, and if it were not, the pedigree might be given, as more interesting because more unknown to the Greeks than their own. The same kind of reasoning would prove Homer to be a Phenician.† Against this theory it may be further remarked that Homer makes no effort in describing the Trojan character. His more prominent and distinct characters are all Grecians, while between one Trojan and another there is little distinction. With the geography of Greece Homer seems to be accurately familiar, but appears ignorant and self-contradictory with respect to Troy. Moreover Homer represents Grecian warriors as superior in military art, and Grecian women in dress. The aggrandizement of the Grecian name was the chief motive for the faithful transmission of the poems. And if the poet had wished to depreciate them, materials were at hand which he has not used.

3. The more general opinion is that Asia, either Ionia or Aeolia was the land where first appeared the Homeric poems.

The circumstances of the contention upon this subject among the Ionian States, generally appealed to by the Asiatic party is rather an argument against them, as it shows that they could never come to any agreement. The long preservation of particular rhapsodies among them would account for the common claim. The evidence of an Ionian origin drawn by Wood from the winds described as blowing on the Asiatic shore, is not decisive. The poet would speak of the winds as if he were on the shore, whatever might be his situation. Iliad II. 535 is another Asiatic passage where the poet speaks of the Locrians as

* Iliad XX. 216. † Odyssey VII. 56.

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dwelling on the other side of Euboea. But this passage is pronounced by Knight to be an interpolation. Il. II. 626, containing a similar proof, is shown to be spurious by the unhomeric use of *ναίω* for *ναιετάω*. If these passages were genuine they would only prove the Asiatic and separate origin of the Catalogue of ships which appears evident from the inconsistency of the statistics with other parts of Homer. Each ship is made to contain 120 men, horses, etc., though elsewhere described as small enough to be dragged on shore like a boat. The catalogue would also be more interesting and useful to Asiatic colonists than native Greeks.*

Against the Asiatic origin it may be remarked, 1. That Homer makes no mention of Smyrna, his reputed birth-place, or of the river Meles, from which he is called Melesigenes. He makes no mention of the Ionian States, and the Aeolian and Phrygian States in Asia he seems to know only by report. On the contrary in all his descriptions of European Greece, he is evidently at home.† 2. The monarchical sentiments found in various passages‡ would hardly proceed from an Ionian Republican. 3. The common supposition that Homer acquired his intimate knowledge of Greece by travels, is rendered improbable, when we consider how difficult communication between the two countries was rendered by the distractions of the age. 4. There are several passages which could come only from a European Greek. He makes the sun rise and set in the ocean, whereas an Asiatic Greek would make it rise from behind wooded mountains, as his east was dry land. 5. In Il. XII. 239, *ζόφος* refers undoubtedly to unexplored regions in the northwest of Europe. But an inhabitant of Asia could not so use it, but must refer it to Greece his west, which would be extremely unnatural. 6. It ought not to be objected to this view that it is destitute of historical support, since the traditions of that period are themselves unsupported, and it is easy to account for their discrepancy with it.

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* Knight's Prolegom. p. 64.

† Strabo, B. VII. p. 457.

‡ Iliad II. 203. Odyss. XV. 402.

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IV.

BECKER'S OBSERVATIONS ON DEMOSTHENES AS A STATESMAN AND AN ORATOR.

Biographies of Demosthenes.

I. Contemporary writers.

Of these only some fragments remain, collected in Plutarch's Life.

The orations of Demosthenes may be referred to, particularly the *λόγοι ἐπιτροπικοί* respecting his youth, and the Philippics, the De falsa leg. and the De Corona concerning his political life.

II. Subsequent writers.

1. Plutarch's Life is valuable, as he cites for his authorities the original biographers, particularly Theopompus. Theopompus is not very credible authority, and Plutarch himself from his credulity and his partiality for the Thebans, is not a satisfactory biographer. 2. Life of Demosthenes, or the Lives of the ten Orators. This is ascribed by Taylor and Rhunken to Plutarch. It is a confused and unimportant compilation. 3. Lucian's Eulogy on Demosthenes. This does not contain many particulars of his life, but is a beautiful and merited tribute to his character. 4. Life of Demosthenes by Libanius. This work comprises only that portion of his life, which is necessary for the understanding of his first political speeches. 5. Life of Demosthenes by Zosimus. It contains nothing new and is remarkable only as the production of a *rhetorician*, who makes Demosthenes to have been his own rhetorical teacher. 6. His life by Suidas is an unimportant compilation.

Upon the rhetorical merits of Demosthenes the world have been united in admiration, but different views have been taken of his character as a man and a statesman.

The father of Demosthenes, was Demosthenes a reputable and opulent manufacturer of Athens. His mother was Cleobula, daughter of Gylon an exile in Scythia. Dionysius makes the year of his birth the fourth of the ninety-ninth Olympiad. But the date given by Plutarch, the fourth year of the ninety-eighth Olympiad, accords better with subsequent dates with

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which we are acquainted. The oration against Midias, pronounced in the thirty-second year of his age is dated Olympiad 107. 4. The year of his death, in the sixty-third of his life, is made to be Olympiad 114. 3. His father died when he was seven years old, leaving also a daughter five years of age, and a widow. His property he left in the hands of administrators who conducted themselves so fraudulently that Demosthenes at the arrival of his seniority, (at the age of eighteen,) found himself possessed of seventy minas instead of thirty talents, his rightful due. What was worse, his guardians for their own greater security had entirely neglected his education. But as soon as his name was enrolled as a citizen, he commenced a prosecution. The case continued in court four years, when he succeeded in obtaining a verdict of ten talents against Aphobus. But the advantage in mental discipline thus derived, was far greater than this pittance of his father's property. His studies preparatory for the legal suit formed his taste for oratory, and had an important influence on his future destination.

Demosthenes doubtless attended the instructions of Plato, now lecturing in his old age at the Academy. The instructions of Isocrates, although the most celebrated, were too costly for his limited means, and he was obliged to select for his teacher Isaeus, using the notes on Isocrates which he borrowed from a friend. Isaeus had a great reputation as a barrister, and besides fitting Demosthenes for his immediate work, proved for him a severer and more profitable model than he could have found in the polished but pointless periods of Isocrates.

Demosthenes studied the authors of Greece. His particular favorite was Thucydides, rather from the congeniality of his spirit than from the standard character of his style.

But the defective and uneducated state of his physical system seemed to preclude the possibility of his rising beyond a certain limit. On hearing Callistratus greatly applauded in a popular assembly, he was fired to emulate his effort. But his attempt was an entire failure. So defective had been his physical education, that he could not succeed in that part of oratory called by the Athenians ἀπόχρισις. In the confusion of the assembly, he could not make himself heard, as his action was not sufficiently attractive to secure silent attention, and those who listened disliked the short periods in which his short breath compelled him to express himself. In disgrace he left the stand. The player Satyrus found him in his mortification, explained the cause of his failure, and by reciting after him a passage from

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one of the tragedians impressed upon his mind the importance of attending to the externals of oratory. Do that, said the player, and you will one day stand not second to Pericles himself.

Demetrius Phalerius a credible contemporary historian professes to have had from the lips of Demosthenes an account of the measures he now adopted to make himself an orator. He secluded himself entirely from society, built a subterranean study, practised attitudes before a mirror, suspended a sword over his naked shoulder to keep it from protruding, and to seclude himself more closely shaved off his hair. He went by the seashore and vied with the voice of the waves, put pebbles in his mouth to cure his stammering, and declaimed while running up and down hill. He habituated himself to habits of close analysis of the orations which he heard, and availed himself of every opportunity for improvement. He was always assiduous in preparing for his efforts, even after the perfection of his powers. He justified this assiduity on the ground of his respect for Athens, and was unmoved when called a water-drinker, or a lamp-orator. By his steady exertions he presented to the world an example of a constantly progressive mind, his last effort, the De Corona, being his best. But we learn from Plutarch several instances in which he exhibited extemporaneous power. One against Pytho the Byzantian, before the ambassadors of the confederacy, and another against the sophist Lamachus. In both of these cases he signally defeated his opponents and gained great applause for himself.

Eight years elapsed before Demosthenes appeared again in a popular assembly. Meanwhile he practised as an attorney in the courts, preparing those legal arguments in civil cases of which twenty-six are extant.* By his law-practice he acquired that intimate acquaintance with the Athenian code which was of essential service to him as a statesman. Probably at this period were composed the *προοίμια δημηγορικά*, or introductions to popular harangues. These he afterwards used, and it is interesting to compare his first copy with the oration as it was delivered.† In this he was imitated by Cicero, in his "volumen proemiorum."‡

A judicial orator would recommend himself to the favorable notice of the people by the skilful conduct of state cases—calling to account those citizens who had proposed bad laws, or defending those thus accused. Demosthenes' first efforts in this

* Probably only that for Phormio was delivered by himself.
† See Philip 1. Olynth. 3. ‡ Atticus 16. 6.

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department were two arguments,* the first against Leptines, with reference to his law prohibiting exemption from duty, and the second against Androtrion, on the illegality of honoring a senate that had not fulfilled its duty. These speeches, particularly the first, from its jealous regard for the honor and faith of the state as well as its flatteries of the people, made him at once popular, and opened the way for his career as a public orator. His first effort in this capacity was in the year following, in the oration *περὶ συμμοριῶν*, or as Demosthenes calls it, in his oration for the Rhodians, *περὶ τῶν βασιλικῶν*, and so Dionysius calls it the *speech* on *the Persian* war. It was a triumphant effort, not only for the reputation of the orator, but for the safety of the state.

During the following year he wrote for Diodorus the oration against Timocrates—and delivered in the assembly the oration for the Megalopolitans, and perhaps that *περὶ συντάξεως*. This year was remarkable as first calling the attention of Demosthenes to the design of Philip which he made his chief topic of examination for fifteen years. Philip had now pretty thoroughly established his power and dominion. His conquest on the coast of the Sea of Torone fortified him against attacks from the seaside, and the victories on the north secured him from that quarter. He had been five years at league with the Thessalians, his neighbors on the south. He had a brave and well disciplined body of infantry well supported by the newly discovered mines at Philippi, and Thessaly supplied his cavalry. He was able to procure fleets from similar sources at his pleasure. But above all he was favored by disunion in the Grecian states, and by the idleness and profligacy which prevailed in Athens. Since the Peloponnesian war, the strifes and jealousies between Athens, Sparta and Thebes seemed to preclude the possibility of their uniting against Philip. Athens was quarreling with Sparta about the Megalopolitans, with Thebes, since Epaminondas; about the *ἡγεμονία*, with Chios, Rhodes and Cos about their indepeudence, and besides became involved on the part of the Phocians in the sacred war. Besides this the extensive revenues of the state were wasted on the pleasures of peace. A bad habit had sprung up of employing foreign mercenaries instead of citizen soldiers in the battles of the state, and these, if poorly paid as they generally were, became insubordinate hordes, ravaging the region for booty. The generals lost all power of disci-

* Year 2nd of Olymp. 106.

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pline, and the best of them refused to command. The situation of the orator in a free state, with no more power or authority than the bribed demagogues who opposed him, rendered him far inferior to a powerful autocrat. For an interesting passage on this subject see De Corona sec. 69.

In the fourth year of the hundred and sixth Olympiad, Philip was employed by the Thessalians to drive out Lycophron, one of their tyrants. The latter took refuge with the Phocians, who under Phyllus conquered twice the army of Philip. Being obliged to reinstate his forces in Macedonia, he returned and routed the Phocians, and passed on to occupy the passage of Thermopylæ, in order to place his enemies more completely in his power, and to establish himself in the heart of Greece. From this design he was repulsed by the energetic conduct of the Athenians. Excited and encouraged by this event, Demosthenes in his first Philippic presented a plan to blockade the Macedonian harbors, and thus to keep Philip at home. We have no evidence from the subsequent state of the war that they complied with the direction. The probability is that they voted to raise the necessary supplies, but the current report of Philip's sickness and death prevented them from acting. We have no evidence that for three years afterward Demosthenes spoke in the public assemblies. The oration against Aristogiton was written during the same year with the first Philippic.

In the second year of the hundred and seventh Olympiad the Rhodians sent their request to Athens for aid in obtaining relief from the oppression of Artemisia. The recent hostile position of Rhodes rendered the result doubtful, but Demosthenes appeared for the Rhodians, urging a magnanimous support of these penitent and returning allies. Fortunately for Athens the death of Artemisia rendered the assistance unnecessary.

Philip was now occupied with two neighboring enemies in Macedonia. The first was Cersobleptes king of Thrace, of whom we have no definite knowledge,* the second Olynthus, a free state on the bay of Torone, of his expedition against which we have all needful particulars. Olynthus from its earliest history had been at enmity with the Macedonian princes. Philip at first endeavored by favor to secure its friendship, but it soon separated itself from him, and sought the alliance of Athens.† The indignation of Philip soon found a pretext for development, in the guardianship afforded by Olynthus to the

* Dyonys. VI. p. 735. † Olymp. 106. 4.

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two natural sons of Amyntas, who had made an attempt on Philip's life. Philip invaded their territory with the threat—Either I must leave Macedonia or you Olynthus. They turned to Athens for aid. Demades and some other orators opposed their request, but Demosthenes showed so clearly the important advantage of their uniting with Olynthus against a common enemy, that they sent to their relief 2100 mercenaries under Chares. But Chares proved an inefficient general, and Philip continued his incursions until he had twice routed the Olynthians in the field, and shut them up in the city. They then made a second call upon Athens. Demosthenes once more appeared in their behalf, and succeeded in causing a host of 4000 mercenaries and 150 cavalry under Chiridemus to be sent to Olynthus. Their success was at first indifferent, and the Athenian army was soon turned into a horde of banditti, a terror to those they came to aid. This induced the Olynthians in their third request to pray for citizens rather than ξένοι. According to the solicitation of Demosthenes, an army of 2000 footmen and 300 horsemen, all native citizens, under Chares were ordered to the relief of Olynthus; at the same time it was determined to send ambassadors to stir up the several states of Greece against this common enemy. Meanwhile by the treachery of two of its citizens Olynthus was betrayed into the hands of Philip.

Only one state now remained to Athens, and that was Thracian Chersonesus. It was a great object to retain that state from its importance in the corn-trade, and it was now so completely in the power of Philip that the only course seemed to be to prevent his incursion upon it by peace. To that object Demosthenes now turned his attention.

After the overthrow of Olynthus, Philip celebrated the Olympian games with great pomp in Dium. He took care that delegates should be present from all parts of Greece, and among other arts to win those present to his cause, he mentioned quite publicly his desire for a peace with Athens. This was soon reported in Athens. Another circumstance tended still more to bring matters to the desired result. Phrynon, an Athenian was seized by a band of Macedonian robbers, who released him only on the payment of a ransom. Ctesiphon was sent to Philip in company with him to demand back the ransom. They brought back so favorable an account of the peaceful intentions of the king, that Philocrates proposed that Philip should be encouraged to send ambassadors to Athens in order to treat con-

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cerning peace. This measure was supported by Demosthenes. Aristodemus the actor was sent to demand the freedom of some Athenian citizens taken when Olynthus was destroyed, and he brought back favorable reports of the generosity and the pacific spirit of Philip. This encouraged Philocrates to propose an embassy on the subject to Philip, and ten were sent among whom were Philocrates, Aristodemus, Aeschines and Demosthenes. Philip received the ambassadors with the utmost urbanity, and promised to send an embassy to Athens to conclude the peace. He sent a letter to Athens full of general and indefinite promises. Having now secured himself against the opposition of the Athenians in his designs upon Thrace, he proceeded against Cersobleptes with great energy and even besieged him in the ἱερὸν ὄρος.

About this time the ambassadors concerning the peace arrived from Macedon. Demosthenes had made all things ready, and the treaty was soon concluded—yet so that Cersobleptes and Phocia were effectually excluded from its privileges. Instantly after their departure Demosthenes urged the immediate mission of ambassadors to administer the oath to Philip, and to secure the protection of all their allies. They proceeded to Pella, but Philip did not return to meet them there till three months afterward, and then the fate of Thrace was sealed. In taking his oath he excluded the Phocians and the inhabitants of Cardia in Thracian Chersonesus from the treaty and sent back the embassy to Athens with a letter full of falsehoods and absurdities. Demosthenes impeached his colleagues. Aeschines in self-defence asserted that Philip had no really hostile intentions against Phocia, but only wanted to humble Thebes. The treaty was confirmed by the people. Phocia was now an easy prey to Philip. The intelligence of its utter destruction and dismemberment threw consternation over the Athenian public. But with the fear of Philip which his assurances removed, vanished also their wrath against the traitors who had so deceived them.

With this intelligence respecting Phocia, Philip requested the Athenians to send and confirm his appointment to the seat of Phocia in the Amphictyonic council. In his oration on the peace, Demosthenes favored this request, as its refusal would only bring down on themselves the united vengeance of Philip and of the confederated states; and it was granted.

A peace like this, unsatisfactory both to Athens and to Philip, could not be very protracted in its duration. But it had one

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important influence, in raising up in Athens a party for Philip which was bought with his gold, which continued to harass the patriots until the state was vanquished.

Meanwhile Lacedemon was secretly and silently husbanding its resources to prepare for regaining the sovereignty. Philip, with the motto, 'divide and conquer,' was watching with interest anything that might tend to prevent that united action against himself, which he had most reason to dread. Lacedemon commenced its efforts by endeavoring to reduce Messene, an old enemy redeemed by Epaminondas, but now again exposed to their power. Philip to widen the breach sent aid to the Messenians. Athens was so impressed with the danger of this quarrel, that at the instigation of Demosthenes, they sent ambassadors to the Messenians, who so fully exposed the corruption of Philip as to induce them to abandon the coalition and the quarrel. An extract from Demosthenes' speech on this occasion may be found in his second Philippic. In that oration Demosthenes exposes the intentions of the king unfavorable to Athens, and declaims loudly against the men who had formed the peace. Hence arose the published, but not spoken controversy, between himself and Aeschines, *περὶ παραπρεσβείας*.

Philip had devoted the season of peace to the increase of his naval power, and soon took the island of Halonesus from its piratical owner. The Athenians sent to claim it as their undisputed possession. He wrote back disputing the legality of their claim, but offering to make them a present of the island. Great was the indignation among the orators in which no doubt Demosthenes participated, although the oration on Halonesus is not rightly attributed to him. These bickerings at length broke out into open quarrel. Cersobleptes, king of Chersonesus, made an exertion to free himself from the tyranny of Philip. Philip meant to avail himself of the opportunity to subdue him utterly, and thus secure for himself the whole Thracian seacoast as far as the Bosphorus. Cersobleptes was aided by Diopithes, the Athenian general, successfully to repel this aggression, and Diopithes was defended by Demosthenes in the oration on the Chersonesus. Philip now endeavored to effect an alliance with the Byzantians. On this occasion Demosthenes delivered the third Philippic, in which he endeavored to aggravate the already embittered feeling of the people, and to point out war as the only means of redress against the man who had already forfeited their confidence, and violated their treaty. In accordance with the counsel of the orator in this speech, the

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Athenians sent an army under command of Phocian to Eubaea, who forced the Macedonians to retire, and drove out the dynasties supported by Philip. A crown was voted to Demosthenes by the states of Eubaea.

Philip now turned his attention to Thrace, where he wished to subdue Perinthus and Byzantium. He was long resisted by their impregnable situation and their boldness, but as Athens was irritated by their refusal of the suspicious aid of Chares, their admiral, it was feared that they could not hold out long against Philip. By the advice of Demosthenes the Athenians relinquished their wrath, and sent Phocion with a force which effectually frustrated the plans of Philip in that quarter.

Philip, completely baffled, was obliged to retire from Greece for two years. The events of that period are not well authenticated. He commenced an expedition against the northern tribes for the double purpose of exercising and encouraging his troops, and to give his bribed adherents in Greece a better opportunity to further his designs. A way was as length prepared for his return. Aeschines got up, probably with treacherous motives, a second Sacred War, with reference to the doomed Cyrrhaean region, noticed in the oration of Aeschines against Ctesiphon* and that of Demosthenes on the crown.† After much trouble the command was given to Philip, and he made his appearance in Greece with 30,000 footmen and 2,000 horsemen. Of course so large a force must have been designed for something more than the subjugation of so small a place as Amphissia. He had his eye on Athens. And the Athenians perceiving it determined to keep him occupied as long as possible at a distance from themselves. They sent troops to the number of 10,000 to aid the Amphissians—but Proxenus, the general, proved a traitor, and left the Amphissians to their fate. Philip made his winter quarters in Amphissia and Locria.

In the third year of the hundred and tenth Olympiad, Philip was again in motion. The Athenians in terror solicited first a truce, and finally a peace; which last he promised to bestow on condition they would banish such of their orators as were opposed to him. To please Thebes, he took Elatia, the capital of Phocis. The consternation which this intelligence excited at Athens, and the measures adopted, may be gathered from the oration on the crown.‡ Agreeably to his recommendation an embassy was sent to Thebes. They were there met by a pow-

* Sec. 36—44. † Sec. 46—52. ‡ Sec. 53—60.

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erful embassy from Philip, but the eloquence of Demosthenes and the excellence of the cause prevailed, and to the joy of Thebes and Athens the desirable coalition was formed. But the joy was soon dissipated by the battle of Cheronea in which after a most closely contested struggle Philip proved completely victorious, and more than a thousand Athenians were slain and two thousand taken prisoners. Great was the consternation occasioned at Athens by this event. The city was put in a posture of defence, and the approach of Philip was daily looked for. But with his customary moderation, influenced also by his respect for Athens as the seat of literature and the arts, Philip refrained from further conquest, sent back the prisoners, and sent Alexander to arrange a treaty, requiring only that they should send ambassadors to the assembly he was about to hold in Corinth. Very different, and more severe was his treatment of Thebes.

Lysicles one of the generals was prosecuted and condemned. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to bring Demosthenes to a similar punishment. He was appointed to deliver the funeral oration, and probably executed the task with more taste and skill than the composer of the ἐπιτάφιος which is commonly attributed to him. But a strong party from that event began to form itself against the orator, which proved too much for his talent and virtue.

Meanwhile the proposed convention was held at Corinth for the purpose of enlisting the Greeks in Philip's expedition against Persia. To that he was directing all his plans and efforts, when at the celebration of his daughter's nuptials at Aegea, he was assassinated in the twenty-fourth year of his reign and the forty-sixth of his age.* Demosthenes in the enthusiasm occasioned by this intelligence forgot his domestic troubles, joyfully made annunciation of it to the people, demanded a crown for the assassinator, and spoke contemptuously of Alexander. All Greece soon caught the feeling and proclaimed their independence of Macedonia. But it did not amount to an efficient and organized union against Alexander, and when he appeared with an army of Boeotians, Athens sent to solicit peace. He granted it on the same conditions as his father had done. This was that they should coöperate with him against Persia. He then turned his attention to revolting tribes north of Macedonia. A revolt at Thebes, in which it is uncertain how far

* See Gillies' Greece.

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Athens shared brought Alexander down upon that city with the spirit of carnage, and only by the solicitations of Demades was he kept from insisting upon his demand from Athens of the persons of her orators.

Alexander now proceeded to his expedition against Persia, and left Antipater to take care of Macedonia and Greece. Athens might now have remained peaceful and happy but for that proud spirit which disdained inferiority and subjection. Such was the spirit cultivated by Demosthenes and his party, and opposed by the strong Macedonian party raised through the influence of Antipater in the city.

About this time occurred the celebrated contest for the crown between Aeschines and Demosthenes. Eight years before a crown had been proposed for Demosthenes by Ctesiphon, to be conferred at the theatre at the period of the Dionysia. In consequence of certain illegalities in the decree, Ctesiphon was prosecuted by Aeschines, but in the unsettled state of the city a favorable opportunity for the trial had not occurred till now. Aeschines lost the case, and being unable to pay the fine retired to Rhodes.

This triumph exasperated the more the enemies of Demosthenes, and they endeavored to degrade him lower than ever from his temporary elevation. A favorable opportunity soon occurred.

The unsuccessful revolt of Agis of Lacedemon, the Athenians had not shared in, but another under Leosthenes they were secretly aiding. Antipater perceiving it determined to try bribery, as it had been so effectually employed there by Philip. Harpalus an officer of Alexander about this time made his appearance in Athens. He had defrauded his master of great wealth, and was now endeavoring to stir up Greece to revolt. Demosthenes opposed him, as he thought it ignoble to treat with such a knave, but when Antipater sent a demand for the person of Harpalus, and the question was to be discussed, Demosthenes excused himself from speaking on the ground of a bad cold. His enemies circulated a report that he had been bribed to silence by Harpalus. Demosthenes might very sincerely have opposed the surrender even of an enemy to such a demand, but this his opponents pretended to disbelieve, urged on probably by Antipater. He was publicly accused. Contrary to the custom of the age, but probably in accordance with his own suggestion, he was brought first before the Areopagus. Here no decisive evidence was adduced against him, but the judges, probably of the Macedonian party, were prejudiced and

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decided that he was guilty. The case was referred to a more popular court for sentence, and as able counsel were employed against him, particularly Dinarchus who distinguished himself for virulence and bitterness, he was condemned to pay fifty talents and committed to prison. He escaped by flight.* We learn from Pausanias, that Philoxenos subsequently sent to Athens an accurate report of the briberies of Harpalus, in which no mention was made of Demosthenes, whom, from motives of personal hatred, he would not have failed to implicate had it been possible.

Demosthenes passed his exile in Aegina or Irozena, and seems to have been completely unmanned. Some young men who visited him he told, that if two courses had been pointed out to him at the beginning, one to political distinction the other to death, had he foreseen the evils of the former he would have chosen the latter.

The decease of Alexander roused the energies of the opponents of Macedonia, who were already excited by his last command at the Olympic games that the states should recall their exiles. Leosthenes proceeded with great zeal in the collection of an army, and Athens voted to raise a fleet of 240 ships, and to take measures to rouse the rest of Greece to a great struggle for liberty. To the ambassadors sent from Athens Demosthenes of his own accord joined himself, and by his powers of persuasion aided much in securing a favorable result. All Greece was soon in arms, and even Thessaly, so long faithful to Macedon, joined the league. Antipater took refuge in Lamia, and Leosthenes in besieging the city was killed by a stone thrown from the wall. Antiphilus was appointed general in his stead.

Demosthenes by a decree proposed by his cousin Demon, was now recalled from banishment. As he entered the Piraeus all Athens flocked out to meet him. Overcome by his feelings he extended his arms, and considered himself more fortunate than Alcibiades, in that his fellow citizens not by compulsion but willingly had recalled him. The fine was paid by monies contributed by the citizens for one of their religious festivals.

After the death of Leosthenes the Greeks were unsuccessful against Antipater. He was joined by Leonnatus with a large army. Antipater soon withdrew to Macedonia. But still more unsuccessful were the Greeks by sea.

* See Dinarchus against Demosthenes—a performance of great rhetorical merit.

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From Macedonia, Antipater soon returned with a large reinforcement. The forces of the Greeks were now much diminished and dispirited, and were defeated by Antipater with great slaughter. A consultation among the Greek generals immediately after the defeat, resulted in a plan to sue with Antipater for peace. But he refused to treat with them altogether, and proposed to treat with individual states. The treaty and alliance being thus dissolved, Athens found herself alone, exposed to the fury of the enemy. In dismay she turned to the Macedonian party, and sent Demades and Phocion to sue for mercy. Antipater spared Athens only on the most humiliating conditions—changing her constitution, securing the banishment of a large proportion of her citizens, and obliging the remainder to be awed by a Macedonian garrison. So fell Athens, and Demosthenes could not survive his country. Already with other orators of his own party he had retired from the city. They were condemned to death. Antipater sent Archias with troops to execute the sentence. Demosthenes had betaken himself to the temple of Neptune in the isle of Calauria near Troezena. After a somewhat humorous conversation with Archias who had formerly been an actor, he retired as if to write, and took poison long secreted for the purpose. He sank down by the altar.

Having now considered Demosthenes as a man and a statesman, let us proceed to consider him as an orator.

Eloquence has been defined by Kant—die Kunst durch die Rede zu täuschen—the art of deceiving by speech. But that is defining a thing from its occasional effects. Where is the art which has not been *so* abused? From the history of eloquence it will be seen that it was not founded in such an aim.

It is somewhat remarkable that eloquence took its rise not in the free states of Greece but in Sicily, under different political influences. The statesmen and generals of Athens seem to have commended themselves by the straight-forward preservation of a good cause rather than by any skilful or artful collocation of words and sentences. Even Pericles could have little cultivation, and the speeches commonly attributed to him are known to be the work of his historian Thucydides. Coran in Sicily seems to have been the first who employed peculiar forms of words to secure favor and influence. Of his pupils were Tisias and Gorgias of Leontium, the latter of whom being sent on an embassy by his countrymen to Athens, introduced the art there, and remained there as a teacher. He invented

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oratorical numbers and paid great attention to the cultivation of external oratory, but the internal—the thought he much neglected. This school of oratory was too superficial for Athenian tastes, and ended with Alcidamas his pupil. Antiphon the disciple of Gorgias was the first who applied the art to any purposes of utility. First he introduced it into court, afterwards with Lysias and Andocides, into the interesting political matters now agitated, till the art of oratory began to be found indispensable to success, and its cultivation universal.

There were two men who did much to form the taste of the Athenians for oratory, Isocrates and Isaeus. The former, probably a pupil of Gorgias, prevented by his own diffidence from appearing in public as a speaker, disseminated the principles of rhetoric by his written lectures and instructions. He lectured also on the various sciences important to a statesman, and from his school there came out more historians than orators. The other, Isaeus, probably a pupil of Isocrates, but far superior in original powers of mind to his instructor, formed his scholars for the severe conflict of the bar and the popular assembly, and taught them how to convince and persuade. He represented weight of thought clothed with strong yet agreeable expressions as the chief desideratum. While Isocrates cultivated chiefly the external, he attended chiefly to the argument and arrangement, with a partial sacrifice of that smoothness and elegance which we find wanting in all the speeches of his great pupil Demosthenes. From this time the state began to patronize the art, and the office of an orator became one of great responsibility and influence as well as of arduous labor. In the time of Demosthenes, Philip gave much occupation to the orators, and the whole situation of the state increased the importance of the profession. One characteristic by which the orations of Demosthenes are distinguished from all others is the thorough and complete preparation they evince, so that he seems to exhaust his subject. This is particularly true of the oration on Leptines, that on the Crown, the third Philippic, and that for the Rhodians. There is a completeness about the argument that perfectly satisfies, and leads us to feel that no more could be said. Hence David Hume has said that of all human productions these orations come nearest perfection. In others of his public speeches we are not conscious of that degree of perfectness, from the fact that other orators had preceded him, that the people were already well informed, or that the time for speaking was limited.

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The old rhetoricians divided eloquence into three parts. 1. Invention—the discovery of arguments. 2. Disposition—the arrangement of them. 3. Elocution—the working up of the arranged arguments into an effective speech. We shall see that Demosthenes excelled in each of these particulars.

The first thing which strikes us under the head of invention, is his admirable skill in arranging his arguments. Ordinarily he places the best arguments at the commencement, follows them up with the weaker, and concludes with such as will produce the greatest impression. Sometimes, however, he mixes promiscuously the good and the bad, that they may mutually support each other. Thus in the speech against Leptines, the orator ventures upon the doubtful assertion that only a few had been exempted from public duties, and to strengthen it urges the very proper consideration that those thus privileged would return the favor by new services at another time. Again, the orator separates his arguments from one another, so that those received from considerations of expediency may stand out distinct from those received from considerations of propriety and duty. Thus in his Philippics he presents the utility of war, the fame of the state, and the claims of duty, as each separately yet all in unison tending to favor his measures.

The ancient rhetoricians attributed the great success of Demosthenes to his enthymemes. An enthymeme is defined by Aristotle as a syllogism which has not so many members as a dialectic syllogism.* They are of especial use in legal arguments. A good instance of the enthymeme occurs in the oration against Leptines, where the orator shows that favor to the bad is an amiable weakness, ingratitude to the good, a crime. And as the latter is worse than the former, so the law of Leptines, guarding against all immunities, lest they should be abused, is worse than the old system of conferring promiscuously. Another instance occurs at the close of sec. 8, De Corona. Another passage of this kind is quoted by Quinctilian,† "When the law has been before violated and you imitate the violation, can you on that account plead an exemption of punishment? So much the more must you be punished, since if your predecessors had been punished, you would not have imitated them. And now if you are punished, no one in future will dare to respect the sin." These examples might be greatly multiplied. This figure adds much to the force of his eloquence, as

* Rhet. I. 1. † B. V. 14.

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it concentrates the whole argument upon a single point, and forces more readily the assent of the hearers.

Another source of our orator's success was his frequent use of *παρὰ δείγματα*—reasoning from examples. This is rightly judged to be of great importance.* Of especial force was it among a people who revered their ancestry like the Athenians. The orator uses this method in the third Olynthiac, where he endeavors to awaken the spirit of Miltiades and Themistocles, and to bring back the better times of the state. In the first Philippic he incites them to energy and hope under discouragement, from the existence of similar virtues in former struggles, and the glorious consequence. In the third Philippic, the object is to prove that Philip notwithstanding the peace is the foe of Athens, which is sustained by the following induction: he who disturbs Greece, destroys cities and disorganizes states, is our enemy. In the speech against Leptines, to prove the injury effected by his law, he describes the miseries of those deprived by it of exemptions.

Demosthenes is also distinguished for the elevated sentiments with which his speeches are so plentifully strewed. Very different is he in this respect from Aeschines or Isocrates or Lysias, and the only ancient orator who is like him is Isaeus.† From this quality the stoic Panaetius has expressed the opinion, that almost all these speeches seem to favor the stoical doctrine that virtue is to be preferred for its own sake, as almost all prefer virtue to the good of the state.

To come now to speak of the Disposition; this was divided by the ancients into introduction, narration, proposition, proof and refutation of opponents, and peroration. According to Aristotle, the object of the introduction is to make known to the hearers the subject; according to Cicero and Quinctillian it is to make the hearers attentive and favorable.

Almost all the introductions of Demosthenes are short. In some cases they are comprised in a single sentence. In his Philippics one or two thoughts are sufficient for introduction. He begins either with an apology, as in the first Philippic, or a statement of the nature of the subject as in the first and second Olynthiacs, or a contradiction of some previously expressed

* Cic. De Orat. 34.

† See Philip. III. sec. 4, *τὸ δ' ἐνοεβές*, etc. Olynth. II. sec. 4, *οὐ ἐστὶν—οὐκ ἐστίν*, Sec. 7, *ἄλλομαι νύν*. Sec. 8, *μεγάλη γὰρ ῥοπή*. De Corona, passim.

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opinion as in the third Olynthiac, or a reprehension of preceding orators as in the Chersonese oration, or there is no introduction at all as in the Megalopolitan oration. In the private cases, he begins either with a complaint against the character of his opponent, as in his speeches against Lacritus, Callicles and Boeotus, or a profession of inexperience, as in that against Phormio, or a recommendation of the subject as more important than it seems, as against Polycles, or more frequently with a single statement from which to proceed directly to the subject, and sometimes there is none at all, as against Zenothemis. Demosthenes by following the rule of Aristotle avoids the errors of more modern orators in his introductions. He skilfully makes them the key-note to which the sequel of his oration is attuned, and of course they are fitted to prepare the hearers for what follows. On extraordinary occasions Demosthenes would expend more labor on his introductions. The ancients made two kinds, *προοίμιον* and *ἔφοδον*. Of the former class would be those already described; of the latter such as would be necessary to calm the prejudices and appease the irritation of the hearers. A fine instance of this last kind occurs in the De Corona. He rose under unfavorable circumstances. Aeschines had made a great impression against him. His remarks on the law had been acute. His claim on the judges to restrict his opponent to the same arrangement was urgent. But still worse was the impression conveyed that Demosthenes was an irreligious man, and disbelieved the gods. Demosthenes commences with an appeal to all the gods, fitted to dispel their suspicions, speaks of the advantage of his opponent, and again prays the gods to incline the judges not to grant his request.

After the introduction followed the narration. This was designed to give the hearers the necessary information as to the case before them. Of course in speeches advising for the future, like the public harangues of Demosthenes, it was unnecessary, but in legal argument, it was of the highest importance to remove prejudice from the minds of the judges, and give them that information which would lead to a favorable decision. According to Aristotle the qualities of this part should be clearness, probability, and conciseness. Among ancient orators Lysias was most distinguished in this part. But Dionysius, by a comparison of extracts from the two orators, has shown that Demosthenes was in no way inferior. This excellence may be particularly seen in the argument against Conon.

Next comes the proposition, and statement of the plan. An-

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cient orators were much less particular in this than modern ones, because the circumstances of their speeches and arguments made it less necessary, and because it was often expedient to keep up attention by keeping the hearers in suspense. Such is generally the course of Demosthenes. He prefers to speak as he pleases, without the shackles of a previously stated plan.

The most important part was the proof and refutation. In the management of this, Demosthenes especially excelled. His popular speeches consisted of a continuous row of syllogisms, and proofs grounded upon general principles or examples. Very seldom was there any one on such occasions to refute. But in legal arguments very much depended on the refutation of an adversary. Here the external proofs, testimony, laws, torture, etc. came to his aid, but much depended on the power of the orator to infuse life into this dead mass. Opposing arguments were to be taken up and faithfully compared, and proved inferior to his own. Demosthenes introduces his refutations with—'I hear that my opponent will say.' Not that he had heard anything, but by his thorough meditation upon the subject was able to anticipate objections, and thus throw his adversary into great confusion and embarrassment. He does not ordinarily spend much time in refutation, but treats the opposing arguments as if too worthless for his attention. Good instances of his manner may be found in the speeches against Dionysiodorus and Midias, and in that on the Crown.

The last part is the peroration. His public speeches usually end with the expression of some pious wish for the good of the state, or some profession of his own sincerity and disinterestedness. They are all short like his introductions. Of far greater importance should be the peroration to the legal argument. The sympathies of the judge depend much on the closing appeal. But here Demosthenes is far inferior to Cicero. He is better in complaints than in defences. The close of the speeches against Midias and Aeschines are not without power. But ordinarily his stern character seems poorly adapted to the graces of style fitted for moving to sympathy and compassion. Aeschines in this respect is far his superior.

So much for the internal economy—now for the exterior form. The material is not all that gives value to a work of art. The form is also essential to completeness.

Under the term elocution, the Ancients comprehended the clothing and exhibition of the thoughts prepared. The Athe-

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nian populace paid great attention to this subject. Accustomed from childhood to an intimate acquaintance with the poets, and in later years with philosophers and orators, their standard of taste was high, and the correctness they looked for in their public speakers was complete. This was of great advantage to the orator in giving him an audience for whom he would not have to depreciate his own style, but who were capable of understanding his most refined and polished expressions, and his literary allusions. We must judge of the style of Demosthenes, by what were considered in his age the requisite qualities of a good style. These were rhythm of periods, figures, and suitable variations in accordance with the subject. In each of these particulars Demosthenes excelled. The style of an author depends upon his habits of thought. It is a picture of his ideas. According to the predominance of the ratiocinative or the appetitive faculty, will be the peculiarities of the style. In Demosthenes the former predominated, but he is not deficient in the latter, when occasion called him to convince by excitement rather than by proof. To all styles clearness and beauty are essential. Clearness depends on purity and precision. Purity demands words suited to the subject, and neither obsolete nor newly-coined. Precision demands that there be expressed no more nor less than the author intends, and it includes the subordinate as well as the leading ideas. In purity Demosthenes greatly excelled, as Dionysius has shown by comparing him with the principle masters of Attic style. But in precision is he still more distinguished. There is never a redundancy of words, or a sacrifice of sense to sound. Little is there to add, little to subtract. And he is here far superior to all his contemporaries—as Aeschines, Lycurgus, Hegesippus and Dinarchus.

Ancient authors bestowed great attention upon the structure of sentences. Philosophers and historians strove to give clearness, richness and euphony to their periods, and the orators were urged to the same by their attention to delivery. The Greek language was susceptible of great musical expression. Hence the cultivation of rhythm in oratory. But this quality of Greek eloquence is lost to our perception. The nature of the Greek language also contributed to clearness, in its flexibility, in the inversions of which it was susceptible, and in the participial constructions to express the accessory definitions of the main proposition (Nebenbestimmungen des Hauptgedankens.) The sentences of Demosthenes, however crowded with

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parentheses, are all clear. Take for example the first sentence in the first Philippic. Long sentences are not often found in Demosthenes, and when they occur they have more precision than in Cicero. His long periods are composed of different propositions, so that they approximate to the character of short sentences. Simplicity is at the foundation of the great power of Demosthenes.

Demosthenes made frequent use of tropes and figures of speech in his speeches. For a particular account of them see Vossii Instit. Orat. Lib. IV. V. 1. The metaphor—which puts like for like. Thus the words *προσπεριβάλλεται, περιστοιχίζεται* in Sec. 4. Phil. I. bringing before the mind the picture of a huntsman, heated in the chase; *ἀνεχαίτισε* Olynth. II. 4, *ὑπερεκπεπληγμένοι* Olynth. II. 3, representing those terrified by Philip, in the peculiar sound of the word, and the image of one stunned by a stroke of lightning. 2. The interrogatory—Olynth. III. 6. 3. The exclamation he uses not so often as Cicero, as it tends very little to aid the progress of the argument, or the proof. 4. The anticipation (*πρόληψις*) is used in confuting beforehand an adversary. When there is no regular opponent it assumes the dramatic form as Olynth. III. 9., *ὦ τάν*, etc. 5. The sermocination, by which one absent is introduced as present and speaking. Thus Timotheus in De Chersoneso. 6. Repetition, *οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν—οὐκ ἐστίν*. 7. Concession, as De Class. 8, and Cont. Lept. 18, where for the time being the orator admits a position the more successfully to rebuke it afterward. 8. Apostrophe, De Corona, 60. 100. 9. Hyperbole, Phil. III. 6. 10. Climax, De Corona, 55. 11. Aposiopesis, De Corona, 1. 12. Paronomasia, De Cor. *ῥήματα—ἤ δαίματα*. Olynth. III. *καὶ κρήνας καὶ λήρους*. 13. Irony and sarcasm. In De Cor. comparison between himself and Aeschines, etc. 14. Comparisons. These are introduced not for ornament, but for use.

The ancients divide style into three kinds. 1. *τὸ λεπτόν*, the graceful and easy; 2. *μεσότις*, the moderate; 3. *τὸ μέγεθος*, the elevated. The ancient rhetoricians make Demosthenes to have been distinguished for all, particularly the latter. The first he adopted in his private speeches particularly where the nature of the subject or character of individuals demanded. In his public speeches, he adopts the latter. Yet by no means uniformly even there. It is not natural for the human mind to sustain itself at an elevation for a very protracted period. The style only lights up occasionally with flashes of unwonted brilliancy—and then the hearer is let down gradually and gently from his height. De-

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mosthenes sometimes exhibits an air of dulness and a minuteness of detail, which make him less pleasing than many of his less valuable contemporaries. Of this character is the last part of the third Olynthiac. Some passages of the De Corona appear tedious, and there is much repetition in the speech against Leptines. But many of the circumstances of an auditory might require peculiarities in a speech which would detract from its merit as a rhetorical performance.

But how much we lose in being deprived of the orator's own elocution, we may judge not only from descriptions of the ancients, and from the temperament of the man, but from the structure of his style. The very rhythm and arrangement of his sentences show how everything was adapted for oral delivery. The fact that he held them so long in close attention —in the De Corona five hours—would also lead to the same inference in regard to his style of speaking. His tones appear to have been deep and impressive while those of Aeschines were clear and musical.

The expression of his countenance was such as we should expect. A furrow of sadness marked his visage.* His eye brightened in the enthusiasm of discourse, and sometimes glistened with a tear.† Sometimes he forgot himself, permitting the excitement of the moment to carry him beyond the bounds of propriety.‡ One great source of his power was the moral grandeur of his character. Rhetoricians have discussed the comparative merits of Demosthenes and Cicero. For the former, see Longinus, Fenelon and Blair; for the latter Quinctilian and Nigronius.

In the time of the Reformation the orations of Demosthenes were highly esteemed. Melancthon was particularly distinguished for the attention he paid to them. He edited several of his orations and delivered lectures upon them. In the same century Hieronymus Wolf published his valued edition of the whole works of the orator. In the following century Greek literature was almost entirely neglected in Germany, and of course Demosthenes. More recently the influence of Ernesti has been to make more prominent the Latin orator, as a model and text book for study, and the merit of Reiske's edition has not been sufficient to counteract opposing tendencies.

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* Plutarch. † Aeschines ‡ Aeschines 53.

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V.

ANALYSIS OF THE ORATION OF DEMOSTHENES ON THE CROWN, WITH NOTES.

Analysis.

1. Demosthenes invokes the gods, and asks the privilege of arranging his argument as he pleases.

2. Two circumstances particularly give his opponent the advantage: (1) Demosthenes has everything to lose. (2) He is obliged to perform the inglorious and ungrateful task of self-praise.

3. Yet he claims to be heard impartially, according to the laws provided by Solon.

4. He again prays the gods, (1) that they may favor him as he has favored the state, (2) that the judges may so decide as to secure the favor of heaven and the welfare of their country.

5. Passing by for the present the abuse heaped upon his private character, as the judges know what his whole life has been, he proceeds to enter on a defence of his political career.

6. He complains that Aeschines had now for the first time, brought accusations out of all season, and had used the form of proceeding against Ctesiphon, only as a pretence.

7. Proceeding to reply to the accusations of Aeschines, he notices first the peace. It was proposed by Philip, to prevent their uniting with the Thebans, and was accepted by the Athenians because they were weary of maintaining the fight alone without assistance from other Greeks.

8. Demosthenes asserts that he was not the author of this peace, and demonstrates the folly and absurdity of the charge, that at the same time they called on the Greeks to take up arms.

9. The cause of the haste of which Aeschines complains, in ratifying the treaty was if possible, immediately to prevent Philip from continuing his depredations in the then defenceless state of the city.

He defends his attentions to the ambassadors.

10. The ambassadors of whom Aeschines was one, appointed to hasten the treaty, had proceeded with the most unpardonable delay.

11. After the ratification, Philip bribed Aeschines to delay

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communicating it, that he might have opportunity to pursue his conquests.

12. The disastrous consequences to Athens of the quiet proposed by Aeschines.

13. The disastrous consequences to Thebes, occasioned by the same man who now affects such pity for the Thebans.

14. The corruption and iniquity of certain demagogues had been the real cause of all difficulties.

15. Traitors if they succeed, always become odious to their employers. Aeschines was bribed, because Athens had such vigilant guardians of her safety; and to these very men he owes it, that his treachery was not successful enough to bring ruin upon himself.

16. Demosthenes does not call him the friend, but the mercenary of Philip and Alexander.

17. The Impeachment.

18. Demosthenes proposes to examine the different articles in order, beginning with a defence of his political career, as meriting the praise and honor bestowed in the decree of Ctesiphon.

19. He first gives an account of the state of Greece, at the commencement of his administration, full of traitors, torn by faction, exposed to Philip's arts.

20. The part of Athens at such a juncture was certainly not coöperation with Philip, nor indifference at his progress, but the very part recommended by himself.

21. In view of their own glory, in view of the self-denials of their enemy, such a course became them.

22. In view of Philip's progress, it became them.

23. The first hostilities indeed commenced with Philip, and Demosthenes had no part in the retaliation, as may be seen from the decrees and Philip's rejoinder.

24. Demosthenes describes the rapidity and efficiency of his own movements to check Philip.

25. He shows that he was influenced by no bribery, while Aeschines had entertained at his house the enemies of the state, and had been influenced to act for them.

26. The crown was proposed in a similar way by Aristonicus, in reward for the services of Demosthenes. Aeschines never made the least complaint.

27 Through his instrumentality in counseling Athens to aid Byzantium and the Chersonesus against Philip, the city had been honored.

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28. The practice of assisting *enemies* in times of danger, is justified by the example of his ancestors who aided Lacedaemon against the Thebans.

29. They had also aided the Euboeans against the Thebans.

30. Demosthenes mentions his law for equalizing taxation according to property, by which a heavy burden was removed from the poor.

31. The advantages of this law.

32. Demosthenes proposes now, to notice the proclamation and accounts.

33. With regard to accounts he was not obliged to render any, for expending his own private fortune, in the service of the state—but it was for this very expenditure, that Ctesiphon proposed the crown.

34. Precedents justify this proceeding—as in case of Nausicles and Charidemus.

35. By referring to the decree of Ctesiphon, he proves that the reward was offered for his voluntary and gratuitous contributions.

36. As to the proclamation in the theatre, it was justified by precedent, utility and law.

37. Demosthenes complains of the malice and irregularity of the prosecution.

38. He warns Aeschines, lest in opposing a patriot, he be found not only an enemy to him but to the state.

39. He inveighs against the ignorance and bombast of Aeschines.

40. He alludes to the private character of Aeschines, and to the meanness of his family.

41. Aeschines raised from such degradation by the state, had been ungrateful and betrayed it.

42. Aeschines had defended the traitor Antiphon, and had been in consequence degraded from office by the Areopagus.

43. He had also held private communion with the spy, Anaxinus.

44. The condition of a calumnious traitor is made more enviable than that of a patriot.

45. Aeschines had not only favored Philip before but after hostilities commenced, and by his silence showed either acquiescence with Demosthenes, or favor to his enemies.

46. Demosthenes calls attention to the conduct of Aeschines with regard to the Amphissеans; the danger was, that such meanness was almost too great to be believed.

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47. Aeschines was the contriver of the Amphissaean war, but had been opposed in it by Demosthenes, although in vain.

48. Philip hoping to secure the Thebans and Thessalians, as allies, designed to raise an Amphictyonic war, and in order to remove all suspicion he employed an Athenian to propose the plan.

49. Aeschines was the man hired, who being appointed a Pylagoras of the Amphictyonic council from Athens, feigned the story of the sacred Cirrhean Region.

50. It was so contrived that Philip should be at the head of the expedition. He marches as if for Cirrha, but seizes Elatea, then Thebes took alarm and left him.

51. This is proved from the decrees of the Amphictyonic council, and the letter of Philip.

52. The real object of the contrivance was, division among the states, and the exposure of Athens to the fury of Philip.

53. Consternation occasioned by Philip's capture of Elatea.

54. Demosthenes gives the speech he made on the occasion, calming their fears and recommending pacific and conciliatory measures with Thebes.

55. He contrasts his own energetic conduct with the utter inefficiency of Aeschines.

56. He challenges Aeschines even now to point out any better course, that could have been pursued.

57. If a counsellor had given the best possible advice, he was not to be blamed, if fortune had ordered a failure, but rather should be commended, because without his interposition, the result might have been worse.

58. Aeschines could be as properly accused as Demosthenes, for he was silent while the city was in danger.

59. The course pursued, is justified by the conduct of their ancestors.

60. No other conduct would have been worthy of those ancestors.

61. Demosthenes resumes the subject of the embassy to Thebes.

62. The ambassadors from Macedon praised Philip and opposed Athens; their accusations were repelled by the Athenian embassy.

63. The Thebans received our aid with marks of affectionate confidence. Success and victory attended our exertions, and if Aeschines participated in the joy, why should he now change his feelings? If he sorrowed when Athens rejoiced, must he not be considered an enemy?

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64. A great check was put on Philip's course by the vigilance of Demosthenes, as was seen from the altered tone of his letters. A crown was voted to Demosthenes.

65. The decree in that case was precisely similar to the decree of Ctesiphon, and more liable to impeachment, because not then justified by precedent.

66. Then, however, facts were so recent, that Aeschines could not resort to the misrepresentations which characterized the present procedure.

67. Demosthenes enumerates the advantages of his own administration: (1) Alliance with Thebes. (2) Removal of war from Attica. (3) Freedom from Euboean rapine. (4) Coöperation of the Byzantines against Philip.

68. The trifles on which Aeschines enlarged, were unworthy of such an impeachment. It required a liberal and extended review of his administration, from beginning to end.

69. Proceeding on this principle, he contrasts Philip's affairs with their own, as at the commencement of the administration, and shows what great benefits were soon conferred upon Athens.

70. Instead of complaining as Aeschines had done of the great inequality with which expenses were distributed, Athens had rejoiced in the power to do so much.

71. What an uproar would have been raised, if by means of Demosthenes, the alliance with Thebes had been discouraged.

72. To speak now of the defeat—it was not to be laid to Demosthenes, who as an ambassador did all he could to prevent it.

73. The field was not his appropriate province; as a minister he had met and conquered Philip.

74. After the defeat, when if ever, he would have been exposed to popular fury, every mark of confidence was bestowed, and the machinations of enemies defeated by an acquittal from every charge.

75. Ctesiphon had then but expressed the judicial decision often made in his favor. Nor was his frequent impeachment any evidence against him, if he had always been acquitted, especially as Aeschines had never prosecuted him.

76. Demosthenes replies to the accusation of Aeschines, that his fortune had been the cause of ruin to the city.

77. He proceeds to compare his own fortunes with those of his rival, precluding all ill-natured triumphs over poverty.

78. He details his own affluent and honorable circumstances.

79. The poverty, and menial and ignoble career of Aeschines.

80. Comparison of the two.

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81. Demosthenes forbears to speak particularly of his own private conduct, because it is too well known, and it is not a proper subject of remark at such a time.

82. Misfortune was not to be attributed to Demosthenes, but to the fate of Greece, especially as Aeschines and his fellow-accusers had coincided in the measures proposed by him.

83. Involuntary injury is never imputed as a crime—much less, disappointment in those measures which are themselves most eligible.

84. With regard to oratorical talents, his own had been employed for the state—those of Aeschines, in private quarrels.

85. This appeared from the fact, that Aeschines had never opposed the public conduct of Demosthenes, till he was crowned.

86. Aeschines had favored the enemies of his country, while the true orator has the same interest with the people.

87. Aeschines had been guilty of insincerity and falsehood, in denying his connection with Philip.

88. Aeschines was not chosen eulogist of the slain, because a friend of those who slew them, but Demosthenes as a sincere mourner and bereaved friend was selected to discharge the office.

89. The epigram shows that the misfortunes of that event were referred to fate, rather than its advisers.

90. Great injustice is done to Athens, in attributing the defence of Greece merely to the advice of Demosthenes.

91. Aeschines belonged to the class of traitors and subverters of liberty, who were to be found in every state.

92. The pure influence and conduct of Demosthenes, in the midst of all this corruption.

93. Not in adorning the city only, but in fortifying the state, had he been successful.

94. The part of a good citizen, he had everywhere discharged.

95. Certainly he is not to blame for calamity, when single-handed he had resisted it, and would have overcome it, but for want of sufficient coöperation.

96. Contrast between the true and false citizen.

97. Base course of Aeschines.

98. Comparison with the past, unjust.

99. Comparison more proper with the living, although if with the dead, more disadvantageous to Aeschines than Demosthenes.

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100. Demosthenes had maintained a firm affection for the state, and that in the most trying circumstances.

101. In conclusion—Demosthenes solemnly and fervently prays that the enemies of the state, may be either reformed, or may become the sole victims of vengeance.

View of the Argument.

Introduction, 1—4.—Plan, 5.—Strictures on the process, 6.

I. Examination of the charge respecting the peace.—Demosthenes, not its author, 7, 8.—Designs of Philip rendered necessary the haste for which Demosthenes is blamed, 9.—Treachery of Aeschines was the real cause of disaster from the peace, 10—16.

II. Impeachment, 17.—Plan of reply, 18.

1. Defence of his own administration, 19—31.

(1) Importance of opposing Philip—(a) from the state of Greece; (b) from the glory of Athens; (c) from the energy of Philip, 19—22.

(2) Philip commenced hostilities, 23.

(3) By his efficient opposition to Philip, and his refusal to be bribed, he had gained a crown, 24—26.

(4) Through his influence, the state had been honored, 27.

(5) The aid furnished to enemies in distress, is justified by precedent, 28, 29.

(6) The law of taxation according to property, 30, 31.

2. Proclamation and Accounts, 32.

(1) As to accounts—no account need be rendered for gratuitous favor, and for that, he was crowned, 33—35.

(2) The heralding in the theatre, was customary, proper and legal, 36.

3. Prosecution maliciously conducted, and shows enmity to the state, 37, 38.

III. Direct attack on Aeschines and proof of his inferiority to Demosthenes, 39.

1. The family and character of Aeschines, 40, 41.

2. Conspiracy with traitors and spies, 42, 43.

3. Favor towards Philip, 44, 45.

4. His bribed agency in the Amphissaean war, and its results, 46—52.

5. His inefficiency in the capture of Elatea, compared with the vigilance of Demosthenes, who procured in those trying circumstances, a treaty with Thebes, 53—55. 61—63. The glory

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and excellence of that proceeding, notwithstanding its failure, 56—60, influence on Philip, 64. The crown it procured to Demosthenes, 64—66.

6. The unfairness and sophistry in the attack of Aeschines, exposed by an enumeration of several advantages, in the administration of Demosthenes, and the ruinous consequences of a different course, 67—71.

7. He was not justly chargeable for the defeat, and besides had already been acquitted, 72—75.

8. Comparison of the fortunes of Aeschines and Demosthenes, 76—80.

9. Reply to several important points in the argument of Aeschines, respecting his public career, 81—100.

(1) The failure of his expedition was not a matter of blame, because (a) the common misfortune of Greece; (b) his plans were as wise as they could have been, 82, 83.

(2) The warning against the seduction of his eloquence might most justly be retorted on Aeschines, 84—87.

(3) His innocence in the destruction of those at Chaeronea is attested (a) by the fact that he was preferred to Aeschines, as funeral orator; (b) the language of the epigram, 88, 89.

(4) Much that is charged on himself, should be attributed to the spirit of Athens, 90.

(5) Contrast between the course of Aeschines and Demosthenes, 91—97.

(6) The injustice of comparing him with the ancients, 98, 99.

Peroration, 100, 101.

Remarks on the Oration of Demosthenes on the Crown.

1. The *arrangement* adopted by Demosthenes is worthy of notice. His speech is not so logically or lucidly arranged, as that of Aeschines. He takes great care, to avoid the order, which had been marked out for him by his antagonist. Because he was sensible that he was not qualified to meet him, on each individual point of the accusation. After his exordium, before entering upon a formal reply to the impeachment, he seizes on the accusation with regard to the treaty, and refutes the charges against himself, and shows that all the odium properly attaches itself to his rival. He thus prepares the judges for a favorable hearing, by removing their principal cause of dislike to himself, creating a favorable impression with regard to his own career, and a prejudice against that of his

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antagonist. When he comes to a formal self-defence, he passes lightly and contemptuously over the points of law, on which Aeschines had laid such stress, and relies chiefly on the splendid instances of success, which had crowned his own administration. When he comes, in the third place, to attack his opponent's character and career, he ingeniously mingles his abuse with his self-praise, and conciliates the judges by artful flatteries of the people. The whole oration is admirably *articulated* for the effect it was designed to produce.

2. The *exordium* has been much and justly admired. Demosthenes brings, as has been said, Olympus itself to our view. Solemnly he appeals to the divinities for the justice of his cause, and entreats them for aid. And under the influence of the religious emotion, excited in the breasts of the judges, by such an appeal, he begs of them the one great privilege, which he knew was to him the most important—the liberty to arrange his argument in the manner which suited himself, and not as his opponent had demanded.

3. There is a tone of *moral grandeur* in some parts of the oration, which rises far above the rancor of abuse and the vanity of self-interest, and exhibits the sterling qualities of the statesman and the patriot. Thus in sec. 100, (*ταύτην τοίνυν*), "This quality therefore, (patriotism,) you will find remaining pure within me. You see me as I am! Not when my person was demanded, not when they led me before the Amphictyonic council, not when they threatened, not when they promised, not when they sent these wretches like wild beasts against me, did I in any way abandon my affection toward you. For from the very first, I chose an upright, an honest course of public life, viz. to serve the honor, the power, the glory of my country, *these interests to advance, with these to abide! ταύτας αὔξειν, μετὰ τούτων εἶναι.*"

4. The manner in which Demosthenes treats his rival, merits remark. Nothing can exceed the contempt he seems to entertain for his character and his principles, and the bitterness with which he details his private history. There is one passage in sec. 15, where he presses upon him his indebtedness to the good, whom he despises, both for prosperity and life. He shows that had it not been for the opposition made to Philip by the patriotic, there would have been no need of his services, as a bribed adherent of the enemy, nor would his fortune have been so great. And had it not been for the successful resistance of Athens, he would have fallen into the disgrace and

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danger which always attends the traitor, under the suspicions of a victorious employer. This is a bold specimen of the figure of *anomaly* noticed in the remarks on the first Philippic.

In sec. 16, is a passage of singular point and power. After complaining of his adversary for having disgorged the foulness of his iniquity upon him, καταστιδάσας ἑωλοκρασίαν, he proceeds with great promptness, brevity and wit, to reply to his defence against the anticipated charge of *friendship* with Alexander. His language has a raciness and keenness in the grammatical liberties of the Greeks, which no English idioms can express. "I charge you with being an intimate (ξενίαν) of Alexander? Where did you gain, or how did you deserve the honor? Neither friend of Philip, nor intimate of Alexander, should I be such a fool as to call you, unless indeed, we are to call the reapers or those who perform any other service for wages, the friends and intimates of those who pay them. But not so! not so! Far from it! The *hireling* of Philip then, and now of Alexander, I call you; and so do all these. If you doubt it, ask them, or rather, I will do it for you. How say you, Athenians, do you think Aeschines the hireling, or the intimate of Alexander? (The people shout, *hireling*.) You hear what they say." There is an interesting anecdote told by Ulpian, and pretty generally credited by the critics, with reference to this passage. Demosthenes in order to secure the desired answer of the assembly, mispronounced the word μισθωτός, placing the accent on the penult, instead of the ultimate. The Athenians with their characteristic regard for the niceties of pronunciation, are said to have filled the hall with shouts of μισθωτός in correction of the orator. Many, however, think such an artifice not only unworthy of the manliness of the orator, but entirely unnecessary, as the strong party of Demosthenes' friends would have answered the call without the aid of such a trick, if indeed the whole assembly, inflamed to resentment by his pictures, and excited by this last sally, did not rise to express their sympathy.*

Sec. 25, Demosthenes retorts with great keenness and severity the charge, ὡς σιωπῶ μὲν λαβών, βοῶ δ' ἀναλώσας, that when he had got his bribe he kept still, as though that was his only object, and his treacherous exertions recommenced only when he was in need of another. "Not so you," replies Demosthenes, "but you are clamorous while you have your bribe, (ἔχων is

* Vide Leland and Negris, in loc.

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more permanent than λαβών, and denotes that he was always receiving bribes,) and you will never desist, unless these by disgracing you shall stop you to-day."

Observe also his criticism on the showy and declamatory peroration of Aeschines, sec. 39, and particularly the striking antithesis in the comparison between himself and his rival, sec. 80. "You taught school—I was a pupil. You performed the rites of initiation—I was one of the initiated. You performed in the dance—I paid you. You were a clerk—I was an orator. You were a third-rate actor—I was one of the audience. You were damned—I hissed you," etc.

5. Demosthenes' power of graphic description is very great. An impressive instance occurs in sec. 53, where the orator depicts the consternation occasioned at Athens by the first news of Philip's capture of Elatea. "It was evening, and one came to the magistrates, to announce that Elatea was taken. In a moment, some half through supper, (μεταξὺ δειπνοῦντες,) rising up quickly, drove the traders from their stations, and set fire to their sheds; others sent after the generals, and called out for the trumpeter; and the city was full of tumult." The particularity of the description, and the singling out of small though striking circumstances, mark the hand of a master.*

Very different in its character is the humorous and sarcastic, but equally graphic description in sec. 79: "But you, dignified and supercilious man, come, look at the fortunes of your life. Under these auspices, when a boy you were nurtured in penury, a drudge to your father in his school, preparing his ink, scrubbing his benches, and sweeping his school-room, in the office of a slave rather than of a free boy. And when you became a man, you read to your mother the forms of initiation, and assisted her in the other duties of her art, employed with fawn-skins and kettles by night, purifying the novitiates, besmearing them with clay and bran, and after the purification, dictating to them the formula—*I have escaped the bad, I have found the better*—boasting that no one could howl like you, (and so I think, for we cannot suppose that one could speak thus magniloquently, if he were not a magnificent howler,) and by day, leading the beautiful Bacchanals with their crowns of fennel and poplar, grasping the snakes and waving them over your head, and crying Evoë Saboë, and dancing Hyes Attes! Attes Hyes! saluted by the old women with the titles, Leader! Conductor! Ivybear-

* See note, in loc.

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er! Vanbearer! and titles such as these! receiving for your wages, crumbs, biscuit, and new-baked crust!"

6. There are some passages of a lofty, commanding and impassioned eloquence in this oration. Take as an instance the celebrated oath, *οὐ μὰ τοὺς ἐν Μαραθῶνι*, sec. 60. Longinus comments on this passage as follows: "Demosthenes speaking in defence of his administration, introduces an *Ἀπόδειξις*. What now was the most natural mode of expressing his idea? 'You have not erred, who engaged in the contest for Grecian liberty; and of this you have familiar examples, for the heroes of Marathon, of Salamis, of Platea did not err.' But when, as if suddenly inspired by a divinity, he rolls out this oath by the heroes of Greece—'It cannot be that you have erred—no! by those who fought at Marathon,' he seems, by the single form of adjuration, which I call here apostrophe, at once to deify his ancestors, as if it were right to swear by those who died so gloriously, as by gods, and to change the nature of his argument into the majesty and pathos of an oath which forced conviction by its singular beauty, and also to produce an influence so soothing upon the hearts of his hearers, that in the elation of these encomiums, they are led to esteem the battle with Philip, no less than the victories at Marathon and Salamis; and so by the force of the figure, he carries away his audience with him."* The whole impression of the passage is truly grand. Instead of using unnecessary amplification, he uses the greatest conciseness consistent with *force*.

The passage with which the oration closes is one of deep solemnity and fervor. After having exposed the conduct and motives of the enemies of the state, he proceeds:

"O do not, ye gods, do not one of you assent to their wishes. But first of all, even to them, impart a better purpose and spirit. Or if they are so incurable, them by themselves—(*τούτους μὲν αὐτοὺς καθ' ἑαυτούς*)—pursue with ruin and destruction on sea and land, but to us who remain, secure a speedy relief from impending terrors, and a sure deliverance."

Comparison between Aeschines and Demosthenes.

The distinguishing characteristics of the two orators are easily discerned in the midst of the excellences which are common to both. They each warmly enlist our sympathies, both in the justice of the cause and the character of the speaker. Each

* Longinus de Sub. § XVI.

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has passages which elevate, excite or awe, and through both speeches, there is a sustained power, an earnestness, a command of the subject, which awakens our admiration, and constantly reminds us that we are witnessing a mighty conflict. There is one principle of contrast, however, which follows us everywhere, and to which may be referred almost every individual difference between the two. Demosthenes carries throughout his performance an impression of *grandeur* and dignity, mental and moral, which his antagonist does not possess. Aeschines is the more subtile of the two, and while we are reading his discriminating *exposé* of the laws on which his opponent must be condemned, we admire his sagacity, his foresight, and his acumen; but when Demosthenes by a hasty and easy blow, seems at once to demolish the carefully raised structure, and to pass over the trifles as too insignificant for his attention, his rival almost degenerates in our estimation into a quibbler. Demosthenes moreover sustains the elevated character of a statesman, far better than Aeschines. There is a moral sublimity in some of his political sentiments, and a spirit of patriotism breathing through his speech, which awakens the conviction that he was a sincere man. This we never feel so strongly in the case of Aeschines. The fact so frequently and severely forced upon him, that he had been an actor, meets us on almost every page. After the reply of Demosthenes has been perused, we feel that Aeschines is an actor still—and our respect for the politics and the motives of the speaker, sinks in our contempt for his occupation. Urged on by a personal hatred, as he is, we feel that he is *acting a part* against Demosthenes, plying all his machinery, for purposes of stage-effect. In some of his principal passages, there is what may be called a degree of *dramatic execution*, as for instance, in the passage on the orphans of the heroes of Chaeronea, (sec. 49,) or more especially, the grand and solemn array of the past, which he introduces upon the stage, at the close of his speech. These passages are admirable in themselves—they exhibit a power of imagination, which was not possessed by Demosthenes, whose excitement and elevation were rather momentary, than capable of sustaining the impression in detailed power. Yet the conciseness with which he expresses his emotions however intense, the sudden and rapid disclosure he makes of the images that rush upon his mind, give a force to his style, which would be wasted in the detail, and they startle the feeling of his audience, into emotions, such as no dramatic exhibition introduced and sus-

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tained with the measured march of the buskin, could ever excite. In proof of this, contrast the last of the passages alluded to in Aeschines—the summoning of the dead—with the celebrated oath of Demosthenes. Aeschines calls up hero after hero of the past—and recites their virtues and their admonitions. We hear the tombs groaning with the sombre voice their accordance. Demosthenes has a vision of the past, as vivid for the moment, but instead of prolonging its duration, and drawing out its figures into minute detail, he pours the concentrated intensity of his emotions into a single paragraph, and his words burn with the ardor of a new-born thought and feeling. The same general difference will appear, if we compare the declamatory peroration of Aeschines, with the solemn yet fervid dignity with which Demosthenes concludes. 'Both no doubt felt deeply. Yet the one expresses his feeling in a strange and almost grandiloquent flight, in which he calls to his aid with affected originality the influences of heaven and earth as if they were divine. The other, in a simple yet earnest prayer to the gods, pours out the desires of his soul for his enemies and his country.

VI.

PLAN OF LECTURES ON HOMER AND DEMOSTHENES.

As stated in the Memoir, Mr. Homer formed the plan and collected the materials for three courses of Lectures on the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Writings of Demosthenes. The following are the subjects of his intended Lectures, and the Books of Reference which he selected after careful examination.

I.

COURSE OF LECTURES ON THE ILIAD.

I. The German Theory of Homer.—II. The Life of Homer.—III. The Plot and Analysis of the Story.—IV. The Mythology of the Poem.—V. Similes.—VI. Descriptions.—VII. Characters: (Warriors, Old Men, Females).—VIII. Language: (Dialects, Metre, Harmony in sound and sentiment).—IX. Remarkable Passages: (Parting of Hector with Adromache, Achilles' Shield, Battle with Rivers, Games, Priam's Supplication).—X. Geography, Truth to nature, Tenderness, Epithets, Manners, Repetition, Military Discipline.

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II.

Course of Lectures on the Odyssey.

I. Comparison between the Odyssey and Iliad, and identity of authorship.—II. Plot and analysis of the story.—III. Mythology. (Elysium, Olympus, Necyomanteia, etc).—IV. Manners.—V. Descriptions.—VI. Characters.—VII. Remarkable Passages. (Proteus, Garden of Alcinous, Cyclops, Circe, Scylla and Charybdis.)—VIII. Similes, Language, Tenderness, Simplicity, Geography.

Four or five Lectures on the Lesser Poems.

Books of Reference.

Wood's Essay on the Original Genius of Homer.—Wolff's Prolegomena.—Knight's Prolegomena. (See Classical Journal, Vols. VII, VIII.)—Granville Penn's Primary Argument of the Iliad.—Review of Granville Penn, London Quarterly, XXVII.—Rejoinder.—Classical Journal, XXVI.—Pope's several Essays on Homer.—Dionysius Halicarnassus de compositione verborum.—Homeric Question, American Quarterly, II; London Quarterly, XLIV; Edinburgh Review, LXII; North American Review, XXXVII.—Bulwer's Athens, Book I. Chap. 8.—Book II. Chap. 2.—Schubart's Ideen ueber Homer und sein Zeitalter; (advocating very ably the position that Homer was a Trojan.)—Heeren's Politics of Ancient Greece.—Dalzel's Lectures on Greek Literature.—Review of Sotheby's Translation, Edinburgh Review, LI.—Review of Heyne's Homer, Edinburgh Review, II.—Comparison between Hesiod and Homer, London Quarterly, XLVII.—Thirlwall's History of Greece, Vol. I.—Blackwall's Life of Homer. (Mythology, Travels, Geography.)—Clarke's Travels.—Madame Dacier on Homer.—Translation of the Homeric Hymns, Blackwood's Magazine, Vols. 30, 31, 32.—Mitford's History of Greece, Vol. I.—Histoire d'Homère par M. Delisle de Sales.—Franceron Essai sur le question si Homère a connu l'usage de l'ecriture.—Constant de la Religion, Tome 3, Livres 7, 8.—Hug's Erfindung der Buchstabenschrift.—Kreuser's Vorfrage ueber Homeros, seine Zeit, und Gesänge. Frankfort am Main, 1828.—Schoell's Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur. Band 1.—Nitzch de Historia Homeri Meletemata.—St. Croix' Refutation d'un paradoxe literaire.—Thiersch's Urgestalt der Odyssee.—Feith's Antiquitates Homericae.—Travels of Anacharsis. Le Chevalier's Beschreibung der Ebene von Troja.—Voyage de la Troade. (Translated into English by Dalzel.)—Herder's Schriften zur Griechischen Literatur. (Translated, Blackwood, XLII.)—Ulysse—Homère par Constantin Tholiades.—Review of Sotheby's Translation of Homer, Blackwood, Vols. 29, 30, 31.)—Rapin's Critical Works, Vol. I.—Dionysius Halicarnasseus—Ars Rhetorica, Chap. VIII, IX, XI.—Koës' Commentatio de Discrepantiis quibusdam in Odyssea occurrentibus. Hafniae, 1806.—Besseldt's Erklärinde Einleitung zu Homer's Odyssee. Königsburg, 1816.—G. Lange's Versuch die poetische Einheit der Odyssee zu bestimmen. Darmstadt, 1826.—Topography of Troy, and its vicinity, by W. Gell, Esq. of Jesus College. London, 1804.—The History of Ilium or Troy, by the author of Travels in Asia Minor and Greece. (Richard Chandler, D. D.) London,

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1802.—Dissertation concerning the War of Troy, and the Expedition of the Grecians; showing that no such expedition was ever undertaken, and that no such city of Phrygia ever existed, by Jacob Bryant, 1796.—Several Replies to Bryant by J. B. S. Morritt, Esq.—Remarks and Observations on the Plain of Troy, made during an excursion in June, 1799, by William Franklin, Captain in the service of the East India Company. London, 1800.—Thiersch ueber das Zeitalter und Vaterland des Homer. Halberstadt, 1824.—Dr. K. H. W. Völcker ueber Homerische Geographie und Weltkunde. Hanover, 1830.

III.

Course of Lectures on Demosthenes.

I. The Constitution of Athens.—II. The Life of Demosthenes, on the basis of the usual biographies, with a complete account of his controversy with his guardians, and his letters from exile.—III. The Rise, History and Career of Philip.—IV. The Orations of Demosthenes against Philip; their history and analysis.—V. The Style of Demosthenes as developed in these speeches.—VI. The remaining Public Orations of Demosthenes.—VII. The Legal Oratory of Demosthenes. (Leptines, Midias, etc.)—VIII. The Controversy de Coronâ.—IX. Translation of Dionysius de vi Demosthenis.—X. Demosthenes compared with Cicero and Modern Orators.

Books of Reference.

Mitford's History of Greece, Vols. VI, VII, passim. Vide chap. 38. Sec. 3.—Travels of Anacharsis.—Longinus de Sublimitate.—Dionysius Halicarnasseus.—Rapin's Critical Works, Vol. I.—Fenelon on Eloquence.—Reinhard's Confessions, p. 38.—Cicero—Brutus, 9.—Orator, 7, 8, 31.—Quinctilian, X. 1. 105, (comparison between Demosthenes and Cicero). Demosthenes als Staatsmann und Redner—von Becker.—Hume's Essays, (Eloquence).—Edinburgh Review, Vols. XII, XXXIII, XXXVI.—Quarterly Review, Vol. XXIX.—North American Review, Vol. XXII.—Biblical Repository for 1838, p. 34.—Heeren's Ancient Greece.—Brougham's Sketches of Public Characters, Vol. II.—D. Jenisch's Aesthetisch-kritische Parallele der Demosthenes und Cicero, Berlin, 1801.

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